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CATHOLICISM

THE

Greatest Danger Impending America

BY

PROF. P. M. CLERC,

Ex-Catholic Pastor of Montagny, Prenois, Bourberain, etc.

SAN FRANCISCO,

1889.



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BY

P. M. CLERC,

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TO THE READER.

NINE years ago, by the advice of a prominent Protestant lady, whose husband is to-day, through the suffrages of Catholics, Senator at Washington, I prepared a pamphlet of three hundred pages, in which I demonstrated, by the most positive facts and the strongest arguments, that the Catholic clergy, as a body, is a depraved corporation and the greatest danger threatening America.

That pamphlet was approved by a large Presbyterian congregation and was to be published, when, on account of circumstances which are known to thousands and which I will mention, I judged proper, if not to withdraw, at least to postpone its publication.

Now, motives of general interest impel me to publish, with some additional considerations, the principal parts of that pamphlet, and especially what has reference to the aim, intrigues and machinations of priests to obtain, *per fas et nefas*, an absolute control over the government of the whole world and especially of America.

Kind reader, peruse these lines, however imperfect they are; and, considering the object more than the style, form your judgment and determine if I tell the truth and if I am your friend.

P. M. CLERC.



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Catholicism the Greatest Danger Impending America.

Since, disgusted with the criminal and hypocritical life of Catholic priests and their low and infamous intrigues, I have resolved to abandon the Catholic priesthood and to make my living in an honorable manner, I have privately pointed out, to Protestant and Jewish friends, the Catholic priesthood as the most dangerous enemy to all those who are not Catholics. I have given them ample proofs that the Catholic church, far from being the church of Christ, is nothing but a rotten political body, which has for its object the supremacy of the whole world, and especially America, and to impose an iron yoke upon Protestants, Jews and Gentiles.

Nine years ago, in the pamphlet which I was to publish, after having shown Catholic priests in their true light, I was making to the American people the following appeal :

“American citizens, Protestants of all creeds, Jews, and all of you who do not believe in holy water, allow a fellow-citizen to point out to your attention an immense peril which threatens the life, welfare and prosperity of this beautiful land.

“Many of you are alarmed at other impending dangers, and denounce, for instance, Chinese immigration, monopolies and corporations, Mormonism and other evils. Allow me to tell you that these evils are nothing in comparison with the one I dread for you.

“When I was in office as a priest in New York, I heard a priest express, in a meeting, the Catholic idea on the destiny of the church in this country. Though I do not believe he was a prophet, he prophesied, however, that, in fifty years from date, all America would be Catholic, and that the statue of the Blessed Virgin would replace the Statue of Liberty on the dome of the Capitol at Washington.

“This is the real aim of Catholic priests. They want no less.

“To attain that end, they mix in politics. They fill all offices with their creatures. Mayors, police officers, judges, assemblymen, senators are or must be theirs. They want a Catholic president. They want only Catholic schools. They want all freedom for themselves alone. As they pretend that their church is the only true one, out of which there is no salvation possible, they want to destroy your religious creeds and your public school system, and form the young generation to their image and resemblance.

“To-day, they are still in minority and they do not dare to compromise their cause by imprudent acts of intolerance and religious persecution. But let them take a strong hold upon this land, and you will see them renew the horrors of the Inquisition, the prisons, the faggots, the gibbets, the Saint-Bartholomew.

"You know what they have done for centuries in the old continent. Contemplate those interminable religious wars, which, under the inspiration of priests, have desolated the countries of Europe. Contemplate the rivers of human blood which have flooded the earth to satisfy the rage of these human monsters. Human nature does not change. What they have done in Europe they will do in America, when they have the power to do so. Contemplate your ministers imprisoned or exiled, your lay-teachers expelled from their offices and replaced by ignorant nuns and christian brothers.

"Contemplate those priests, after having established their power, enslaving the souls and consciences of men, fattening themselves with the fat of the land, indulging in luxury, laying snares in the confession-box to the weaker sex, seducing and corrupting your wives and daughters, penetrating by that immoral institution the secret of your homes, leading a dissolute life, scandalizing the people, destroying religion and good morals, and preparing for the future an age of incredulity and revolutions, such as we have had and have still the sorrow to contemplate it in the old countries of Europe, so shamefully scandalized by priests.

"American citizens, look out for your liberty and independence, and for the liberty and independence of your children. The monster which I signalize to you is still young and weak. Fight it and destroy it, while it is powerless. A time will come when it will not be so easily subdued.

"I am neither a politician nor a statesman, and I cannot indicate the means to destroy the monster in its infancy. But I entreat all good American citizens to consult each other and to unite their common efforts against this most frightful impending danger.

"Measures have been taken to crush Mormonism and destroy polygamy. Cannot measures be taken against a set of men, who, under the mask of virginity, lead a life of libertinage and are a permanent danger to your wives and daughters?

"You have passed a restriction act prohibiting the further immigration of Chinese pagans. Can you not pass a restriction act prohibiting the further immigration of Catholic demagogues, God-eaters and wafer-worshippers?

"Catholics have violated the Constitution of the United States, in introducing in America titles of nobility, and creating cardinals who are termed *Princes of the Church*. Can you not give to those princes their passports to go back to Rome?

"Catholics are subservient to a foreign ruler and agitator who takes the name of Pope. Can you not pass a law depriving the privilege of American citizenship to every man who swears obedience to a foreign ruler and agitator?

"Catholics want to interfere with your government and your public system of education. Can you not tell them that they must confine their exertions within the walls of their homes and churches? Can you not remind them that America is essentially a Protestant country, and that, if they want to breathe the pure air of this free land, they must be submissive and not interfere with its government?

"If you do not take a proper step in time, remember that a religious war will take place sooner or later in this prosperous country, and nobody can tell what its consequences will be.

"American citizens, believe a man who has lived among priests and who knows their thoughts, their lives and their aim, and do not stop in your noble endeavors until you have secured this our Protestant and free country against this most dreadful danger."

This appeal was written nine years ago. Many of my friends read it and were more or less convinced of its importance. Since that time, events have occurred which prove that it was pretty well grounded, and that I had a correct idea of the aims and pretensions of popes, bishops and priests.

What occurred at the last elections of Boston ; what the Methodist ministers of San Francisco revealed in their last meetings ; what the *Argonaut* acknowledges in its issue of December 22d last ; what the *Chronicle* of San Francisco says, in its issue of the same day, of the action and resolutions of the *Evangelical alliance* in New York, every thing proves that there is a real danger for America in the threatening predominance of Catholic priesthood.

All those who read the newspapers and are familiar with the news of the day, must have undoubtedly noticed that Pope Leo XIII, who is reputed to be a cunning politician rather than a holy Pope, disregarding the principles and mandates of the Divine Founder of Christianity, does not conceal his design of reconquering, by all possible means, the lost supremacy of the Catholic Church in Europe, and of establishing it in America.

A few years ago, he had the audacity to publish a circular addressed to all Bishops and Priests, recommending them to interfere in politics as the only way to reconquer their decaying power.

What the Pope recommends to his subordinates, he practices himself without scruple or shame.

The San Francisco *Chronicle*, in its issue of Feb. 13, 1889, contains the following item :

"ROME, Feb. 12.—The Pope, in an allocution, says that it is now more necessary than ever for all powers to make common cause with the Church, by reason of the perils by which they are threatened, proof of which was afforded by the recent disturbances in Rome. Arms alone are insufficient. Peace must be preserved by rendering to each what belongs to him and strictly adhering to the dictates of justice."

Does not this mean that the Pope pretends to establish his supremacy over all powers ? that he considers himself as the only representative of justice and preserver of peace ? that he denies the same power to other religious denominations ? that all revolutions, strikes and riots, which have desolated and still desolate both hemispheres, proceed from the fact that he is no more a temporal king nor the supreme ruler of the world ? that earthquakes, floods, conflagrations and diseases of potatoes come from the same cause ?

How is it that, in 1848, when the Pope was a temporal king, he was driven away from Rome by Garibaldi ? How is it that, in 1793, when the Pope was a temporal king, the French revolution committed

so many horrors? How is it that Popes have always been the promoters of wars, and one of them, Julius II, went personally to war?

The *Examiner*, in its issue of Dec. 25, 1888, contains the following article, under the heading of: "The Power of the Pope—Speech of the Pope before the sacred college." The Pontiff appeals to Catholics to *agitate* for the restoration of the papal sovereignty. His address throughout is extremely *violent and bitter*.

"At the present time," says His Holiness, "a systematic war is being waged against the Holy See. Even the *person* of the Pope is *exposed to the threats of the mob*. The enemies of the Holy See have weapons enough already to injure the Papacy, and, if they do not suffice, they are prepared to manufacture fresh weapons."

This article reveals that the Pope is nothing but a *common agitator*; that, being extremely *violent and bitter*, he differs essentially from the sweet Jesus; that, being afraid of Italian weapons threatening his holy person, he is nothing but a coward; that, if he wants to show himself a man, he must either stand firm and silent before the danger or leave Rome in the hands of the mob and transport his relics to other quarters.

An intelligence from Paris, dated November 27th, 1888, under the heading of "*The Pope's New Plan*," announces that the Pope, whose fondness for journalism is well known, is about to start a large popular penny paper for the people, with sound Roman Catholic views in many of the leading articles, which are to be written in the Vatican. He has donated 1,500,000 francs for that paper. (*Evening Bulletin*, Feb. 27th, 1888). What a shocking presumption! What an opposition to the principles of the Divine Master! Imagine Jesus Christ interfering with politics and establishing a politico-religious paper, for the purpose of placing Himself on a throne over Kings, Emperors and Nations!

Though enjoying full liberty in Rome; though living in a royal mansion; though receiving the homages of the whole world, and even of Potentates; though having at his disposition the fat and marrow of the earth, the Pope is not satisfied.

Pope Pio IX left, at his death-bed, a fortune of thirty-two millions of dollars. At the occasion of his jubilee, Pope Leo XIII received, from all parts of the world, donations to the amount of twenty millions of dollars, and, to warm his old heart, ninety thousand bottles of the best wines in the world. He has been complimented by Emperors, Kings, Queens and Presidents, even by President Cleveland. * * * and he is not yet satisfied!

He lately declared that, in the designs of Divine Providence, Rome has been founded, (by Romulus and Remus, who were undoubtedly used as Pagan tools for the benefit of the Catholic Church) to be the capital, not only of the small kingdom of Italy, but of the whole Christian world.

The newspapers have lately published his pretention to play again the part played by the Popes in dark ages, and to make with Emperors and Kings an agreement by which he would join them to crush down modern republicanism, on the condition that he would be placed at the head of the sacred alliance. He has gone further. He has proposed himself as the pacificator of Europe, commanding all powers to disarm and to disband armies.

Look at that old fossil bowing, in the basest way, before the rulers of the earth and encouraging them in their despotism against their oppressed peoples, with the unconcealed design of inducing them to restore to him his temporal power: *Make Me a King! Make Me a King!* he incessantly repeats to them in the most piteous tones.

Look at him crouching before the old Emperor William, his iron-chancellor Bismarck and the young Emperor of Germany.

When the latter was lately in Rome, on a visit to the King of Italy, though being a Protestant, he had the delicacy to go and offer his homages to the Roman Pontiff. Did not the old villain tread under foot all laws of decency in asking from him the re-establishment of his temporal power, and that, under the very nose of the monarch to whom the Emperor was doing honor? Ah! how well deserved was the rebuke of the young Emperor to the old skeleton: "Instead of demanding the restitution of your temporal power, you should do better to aid us to fight revolution, socialism, nihilism and republicanism."

Look at him prostrated before the Queen of England and helping her to keep in misery and bondage his miserable Irish-Catholic supporters, a true vampire who sucks an artery of the poor Irish victim, while the English Lords suck the other arteries. Would he not sell the poor Irish peasantry for a piece of bacon and a sack of potatoes? How cowardly did he act when he lately condemned the Irish League! On seeing the Irish tempted to shake off his yoke and to send him about his business, he crawled before them like a low reptile. He excused himself, saying that he did not mean it, that they had misunderstood him, and that he tenderly loved them, and, when they had cooled off, he came back to his vomit and condemned the movement again, all that for the sake of the Queen and the re-establishment of his temporal power.

See him courting the schismatic Emperor of Russia, the Mahomedan Sultan of Constantinople and even the heathen Emperor of China.

Look at him sending his congratulations to President-elect Harrison, after all his Irish-Catholic Democrats had done all in their power to defeat him.

Look at him disregarding the French nation, because it is a republic and is opposed in principle to his tyrannical ideas. Look at him siding with autocratic Protestant Germany against poor France, which has been called, for centuries, the right arm and the eldest daughter of the Church.

Not content with establishing his supremacy all over Europe, he wants to establish it all over the world, and especially in America.

He multiplies Dioceses, Bishops and Priests. To flatter the pride of Nations, he honors them with Princes of the Church. He creates Cardinals; and these Cardinals, dressed in their princely garments, go around the Continent, showing, like clowns, to a dazzled and astonished people, the splendor of their gorgeous robes. Protestants, themselves, who are fond of display, cannot resist the temptation of shouting hurrah! Through policy or hypocrisy, without knowing better, they exhaust themselves in adulations and praises. Did not some silly Protestant newspapers celebrate the grandeur of Cardinal Gibbons, when he

came to California? Did they not compare him to the great and majestic Richelieu of royal and tyrannical memory?

Archbishop Riordan, who has been absent from his diocese for about one year, is now dined by the Pope and relishes with him the sweet perfume of his ninety thousand bottles of good wine. Does he not concoct with His Holiness the plan of making California a Catholic State? Will he not come back as a Prince of the Church, decked with the scarlet robe, the sacred pallium made out of the virgin wool of a lamb and the bloody red hat?

An order has been given to all Prelates and Priests to put away, for a time, the old rigid discipline of the Church forbidding Catholics to interfere with Protestants and Jews, for fear of being corrupted by them. They are recommended to make friendship with them, not so much to convert them as to use them for their own advantage.

Formerly, when the Church had a strong power, the Jews were denounced as a *perfid nation*, a *deicide nation*. They were *cursed* on the Good Friday. No Catholic could receive absolution, as long as he was at their service. Heretics and schismatics, who had been lucky enough to escape the Inquisition and the faggots, were denounced in the same way. Their marriages were considered as invalid, and their children, as illegitimate. But nowadays, a pillar of the Catholic Church, the Honorable Catholic Judge Sullivan, has pronounced the validity of the Sharion-Hill marriage, celebrated in the obscurity of the closet, without Priest, without Minister, without Rabbi, without Mayor, without Justice of the Peace, without any other witnesses than two sheets and a pair of blankets; and neither Bishops or Priests have rebuked him nor expelled him from their Churches. On the contrary, they are proud of him, they consider him as a Saint, and they have honored him with their suffrages at the last election!

At the same election, Father Pendergast, the great Inquisitor of the Archdiocese of San Francisco and Vicar-General with inquisitorial powers, though being opposed to the public school system, had the effrontery to put publicly his grain of salt in it. To make proselytes and to please Mrs. George Hearst (a Protestant lady, who, to favor her own ambition, protects Catholic interests), he recommended, in common with her, the election of six lady school directors, while Mr. Hearst was fighting them in his paper, the *Examiner*, on the ground that they were on the Republican ticket. Was it not a grand, or rather a funny spectacle to see that Vicar-General, with his ascetic face and his Democratic principles, side with a Protestant Democratic lady, and, through ambition and hypocrisy, though being a good Democrat, endorse with her, the Republican ticket? What will that illustrious Vicar-General do, if he ever comes in power? Will he not then dispense with lady school-directors and claim for nuns and christian brothers the whole management of public schools, to the exclusion of Protestants and Jews?

To-day, under strict recommendation, Catholics will live in peace with Protestants and Jews. All their famished maids and boys will be allowed to go to their service and receive their money, in order that they may give it to their Priests to build fine Catholic schools and churches, and surpass their employers in luxury and display, showing them their great power,

Acting like domesticated cats which play with good-natured dogs, though by instinct they are their enemies, they will associate with them, especially in politics, and grant to them, for a time, a part of the political cake, until they will be able to eat it alone, and to thank them for their unnecessary services.

These hypocritical Catholic cats will play with the good dogs, only as long as they are on the top and have the best of the game. If they are bitten or scratched, they scream and use their nails. Was not this their recent case with the Methodist Ministers? I do not know what the latter said in their vestry-rooms. But I read in the newspapers a sharp note to their address, in which Rev. Father Montgomery, the Chancellor of the Diocese, said to them arrogantly: "As long as you make your crusades in your vestry-rooms, we are not afraid of you. Instead of talking so much, you would do better to do as we do—build fine schools and churches." (A beautiful reason, indeed, to be proud of building schools and churches, when the money is extorted by crafty Priests from poor ignorant servant girls who would prefer to go naked than to refuse them anything, while their Irish Catholic millionaires, better advised, do not give them a cent!)

While those Catholic Prelates and Priests act so hypocritically with Protestants and Jews, see in what unchristian manner they act with the members of their own church.

There is, in America, a large society known under the name of "*Knights of Labor*." Most of the members of that society are Catholics.—Cardinal Tachereau, Archbishop of Quebec, condemned that society as being a secret society. By what I read in the *Alta California*, in its issue of Nov. 28, 1888, that Prelate was right. For a Knight of Labor, Thomas Barry, declared, at a meeting held in Chicago, Nov. 27th, that "*the new organization he proposes in opposition to Powderly is to be secret in the same sense as the Knights of Labor*."—Cardinal Gibbons, of Baltimore, took the defense of the Knights, and pretended that they were not a secret society. Both Cardinals went to Rome to plead for and against the order. Cardinal Tachereau had the best of his opponent, when the cunning Pope silenced him, saying: "If we condemn them, we shall empty our churches. Go home, my friends; say nothing; let us be careful not to break our soup-tureens." And the decision of the infallible pontiff was postponed until after the Greek calends.

To throw a little light on the difference of opinion between the two Cardinals, I must mention a little item of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, (Nov. 1, 1888,) stating that Cardinal Tachereau, being a British subject, had no motive to side with the Irish-Catholic Knights of Labor, while Cardinal Gibbons, being an Irish Democrat, was naturally impelled to keep in the bosom of his Church his own countrymen, whether they were or not in conformity with its principles.

Frightful strikes and riots have occurred in all parts of the States, and especially in San Francisco. Most of the strikers were Irish Catholics. Bombs have been thrown, dynamite has been used, lives and property have been destroyed. Did ever Catholic Bishops and Priests denounce these acts of vandalism? No, they have been like dumb dogs who do not know even how to bark. It seems, on the contrary, that

they approved these disorders, if not openly, at least in secret, because it is known that the police force, from Chief Crowley to the last officer, was siding with strikers and rioters, and the whole police force is composed of nothing else but of Irish Catholics.

Some time ago, a man, well known under the name of Henry George, was trying to obtain the Mayoralty of New York, on principles bordering on socialism. A Catholic Priest, Rev. Dr. McGlinn, whom I consider as a good and charitable man, a true philanthropic man, had the misfortune to associate with him, and to establish, in common with him, an *anti-poverty party*. Dr. McGlinn may have been mistaken, but I do not doubt that he had good intentions for the poor. For this he was condemned and thrown out of the church. Whether the church was too hard on him or not, I will not say. But what strikes me most is that, after Dr. McGlinn seceded from Henry George, Cardinal Gibbons recommended the Pope not to condemn the doctrine of Henry George, while the poor Dr. McGlinn remained under the excommunication of the Church, and his sister-in-law was induced by the Priests of San Francisco to sue his brother for divorce on the sole ground that he sided with him against the Pope. Is Henry George a Catholic convert or a socialist as before? or is the Catholic Church disposed to receive against its opponents the services of socialists such as Henry George and of radical scoundrels, such as Leon Deshayes of San Francisco?

Among Catholic clergymen exists a great deal of dissention which, though it is as carefully as possible kept in the dark, transpires from time to time.

Last year, I read, in some newspaper, that the German Priests of the East complained to the Pope of the arrogance and spirit of domination of Irish Priests, who want to govern alone the whole Church. (My experience as a Priest in New York has taught me that German Priests do not complain without cause.) What did the old Pope answer to their complaint? He sent word that he did not want to cross the water to settle the disputes of Priests. In this, he showed his fallibility, for it is rather impossible to settle the disputes of Priests and to quell their pride.

This year, as a kind of reprisal, the Irish Priests of the East have sent to the Propaganda a petition protesting against the predominating influence of German Catholics in America, and demanding, 1st, that the catechism be taught only in the English language; 2d, that, in those German parishes where sermons heretofore were preached in German, they should be preached now in English; 3d, that no more festivities of a German nature should be tolerated, and, in short, every thing German should be abolished—(*Examiner*, Nov. 13, 1888.) What will be the decision of the Pope? If somebody wants to know it, he will do well to ask it from Bismarck; for he leads the old Pope by the nose.

Who did not laugh at the religious comedy played lately by a Catholic Priest in the case of the Jewish murderer Goldenson? As I have already insinuated, Catholic Priests do not want so much to convert as to seduce. Whether they make a real convert or not, they do not care. Their only aim is to show their importance and to gain popularity. The

Jewish criminal had murdered, without any warning, a young Irish Catholic school girl, and, if she was not prepared for death, in all probability, he sent her to hell. To show to the world a rare example of magnanimity and heroism, the Priest undertook to convert the criminal and to send him to heaven. He visited him in his cell and captured his affection. Whether he converted him or not, nobody knows; for neither the Priest nor the criminal have dared to confess Christ before men. Anyhow, to make a show of himself, the Priest, desirous to renew the imposing spectacle of a former Priest accompanying to the scaffold the King of France, Louis XVI, and encouraging him to die, with these noble expressions: "*son of St. Louis, ascend to heaven,*" the Priest of San Francisco, the holy and heroic Catholic Priest, accompanied to the scaffold his so-called Jewish murderer convert. What signs of conversion did that criminal give on the scaffold? Did he utter a word of repentance? Did he cry for mercy? Did he apply to Christ for salvation? Did he make the sign of the cross? Did he express the desire to kiss the crucifix? No, he did nothing of the kind. He made a ridiculous and bombastic speech having not the least relation to religion, his crime and his blasphemies, and he breathed his last, holding in his hands, not a crucifix, but the American flag and the picture of his coveted mistress!!! and the sacred Priest was there, glorious, all in perspiration, under the impression that he had made a wonder and operated a true miracle! * * * O, comedian!

Is it not easy to see the actual game of Popes, Bishops and Priests? They want to make their preponderance felt, no matter how. Formerly, they fulfilled their duties with much more humility and less ostentation. Now they trumpet their good deeds with the most ridiculous fracas. They want to be everywhere the bosses of the road. Whether in Baltimore, where they build a great Catholic University, which will be the light-house of both hemispheres and eclipse all other universities, or in New York, where they build marble Cathedrals and break the necks of good and charitable priests, such as Rev. Dr. McGlinn and Father O'Connor, or in San Francisco, where they multiply brick churches and wooden schools, and unmercifully boycott the humble author of these lines, they want to establish the supremacy of their Church over the ruins of their opponents; and, to attain that end, they use, *per fas et nefas*, all the means in their power. They buy protestant newspapers, they corrupt ambitious politicians, they seduce Jews by the promise of favoring their trade.

Indeed, they seem to make headway in America. Is it not possible to check their progress? I think it is possible. That depends on the courage and manhood of all those who are not Catholics.

If Catholics are the declared enemies of Protestants, Jews and Free-thinkers, why should not Protestants, Jews and Free-thinkers make a triple alliance against their common enemy?

Catholicism is played out in the old countries of Europe. Is it possible that this proscribed creed should be permitted to find a shelter and a place of refuge in this enlightened and free country?

Look at the condition of Catholicism in the different countries of Europe. France does not want it any more. Spain does not want it.

Germany does not want it. Switzerland does not want it. Belgium does not want it. England does not want it. Holland, Sweden and Norway do not want it. Russia does not want it. Portugal does not want it. Italy does not want it. Rome itself does not want it.

Is it not true that the Pope is uneasy and restless in Rome? Is it not rather singular that the very center of Catholicity has become infidel, and that the Romans do not want the Pope any more?

They do not respect him. They insult him, to such an extent that the poor old man declares he cannot stand it any more. He wants to transport his Holy See somewhere else. He does not know where to transplant his fading power, whether in Jerusalem, or in Malta, or in Belgium, or in America.

Can any one give him a kingdom and a throne? * * * Ah! if I had the means and power, I would present him with a magnificent throne, I would preciousy sit His Holiness on it, I would take him to the summit of Mount Vesuvius, place him on an immense scaffold on the top of the vast crater, and then, calling to my aid the subterranean powers, I would blow him up to heaven, with all his cardinals, bishops and priests, being happy to deliver the earth from its most terrible curse, and the human kind from its most mortal enemies.

II.

Catholicism no longer the religion of Christ.

THIS assertion may appear rash and bold to persons who cannot get rid of ideas received by education and sanctioned by routine. If those persons are willing to put aside for a moment their preconceived ideas and seriously reflect on the following considerations, I have no doubt that they will change their minds.

What I have to say to the public on this subject, I have said long ago to the priests themselves. In order to show them that they have departed from the principles of the founder of Christianity, and that they do not represent any more the ideal of the church established by Christ, I wrote the following letter to the address of His Grace, the most Rev. Joseph S. Alemany, Archbishop of San Francisco, and placed it at the head of my former pamphlet :

SAN FRANCISCO, May 1, 1881.

MOST REV. SIR :—In publishing this pamphlet of mine, my object is to state nothing but the truth, with the sole desire of promoting the public good, by purifying the church and stopping scandals.

I owe this publication to my own self, to your Lordship, to the Catholic people, to all governments and to God Himself.

1. I owe it to myself. I have been so grossly abused and cruelly persecuted by criminal priests and their blind emissaries that I feel it to be only right to reveal the truth about them and about myself.

2. I owe it to your Lordship and to all the Catholic bishops. I know that Catholic bishops have a great deal to contend with among their priests ; that the government of their priests is the hardest part of their administration ; that their main occupation is to correct or hide their vices and crimes, and that they are sometimes compelled to sacrifice good priests to the rascality of mercenaries, who would otherwise scatter and destroy the whole flock. An exposition of this kind will give strength to your hands and help you, with the assistance of public opinion, to employ the rod and chastise those who deserve it, and the scalpel to cut off all that which is gangrened.

3. I owe it to the Catholic people, whom I love still, though I despise their priests. I must show to them, by positive facts, that their priests are largely religious quacks and vicious frauds, whose aim and endeavor is to obtain from them honor, money and easy living rather than to save their souls, and that, instead of being angels, such as they have the boldness to represent themselves, they are often devils under a human form. I must show to the Catholics that they are wrong to submit to their priests in all their demands, that they are mistaken in treating them so bountifully, and that they have a right to better leaders in the way of salvation.

Let them compare the principles of Christ and of the apostles with those of their clergymen, and they will acknowledge how low the latter have fallen.

Christ said that his kingdom was not of this world. When the people wanted to make him a king, he fled away and hid himself. When Peter drew his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus, the Savior rebuked him and said: "Put your sword into the shield, for those who use the sword shall perish by the sword." Did the Popes hide themselves when the people wanted to make them kings? They accepted it eagerly. For centuries, they pretended to be the supreme rulers of all the potentates of the earth. Not contented with being spiritual rulers, they wanted to be temporal kings. They levied armies, they took up arms and killed, in the name of the crucified and forgiving Savior, men whom their sacred duty was to save.

Since they were divested of their temporal power and granted a vast palace for residence, with a royal income, they growl loudly before the whole world, complaining that they are captive, and demanding reinstatement, vindication and money.

What a difference of conduct! Christ wore a crown of thorns and ignominy, had not a stone to rest his head upon, and the Popes wear a triple crown of gold and honor, live still in palaces. Paul used to say: "I rejoice in my chains!" and the popes snarl, being free and in full spiritual sovereignty in the Vatican. Peter said to the crippled man on the steps of the temple: "I have neither gold nor silver; but what I have, I give it to you; rise and walk," and his successors abound in riches. History does not mention the amount of money which Christ and the apostles left at their death-bed. But it is recorded that Pío IX left, at his death, thirty-two millions of dollars, extorted by the means of Saint Peter's pence, from poor servant girls.

What is that Catholic prodigality used for? To keep popes and prelates in luxury and to render them forgetful of their duties to their peoples.

When I was young, I had a great admiration for Pío IX and his secretary, Cardinal Antonelli, whom I considered as two saints and two miracle-makers. But I have been of late amazed to read that the only miracles they wrought were, for Pío IX, to hoard up a fortune of thirty-two millions of dollars; and for Antonelli (sworn to chastity!) to become a father by an Italian countess. On account of the child, a lawsuit was begun after his Lordship's death.

Are the popes grateful to their generous supporters? No, they are guilty of the most monstrous ingratitude. There is no better proof of this than their conduct with regard to Ireland, Germany and Italy.

In this very time, poor Ireland, bleeding under a persecution of 300 years and trodden under foot by the English government, is struggling for life, bread, liberty and independence. For centuries, that generous nation has sacrificed her blood and money for the popes, and—shameful spectacle!—we see the Pope and the prelates condemning her noble endeavors and seeking the alliance of the tyrant, in order to secure for themselves temporal power, personal advantage.

For the same low motives, we see them trying to make alliance with the German government, the persecutor of Catholics. For the same low

motives, we see them opposing the unity of the Italian people, and wanting to behead that nation, in severing from her, Rome, the natural capital of Italy.

What is done at the top of the church is repeated in lower regions. Priests want also honor, riches, comfort ; and Catholics have the simplicity to grant to them all they want with a prodigality which has no other effect than to corrupt them and make them forgetful of their priestly duties.

How can it be otherwise ?

Paul says : " We carry our virtue in fragile vases." Though having been himself ravished to the third heaven, he exclaims : " Who will deliver me from this body of death ? " And he adds : " I chastise my body and reduce it to servitude, for fear that, after having preached to others, I may be myself a reprobate."

Do priests chastise their bodies, like Paul, and reduce them to servitude ? Are they, like Christ, men of pain and sorrow ? What do they do to preserve their virtue ? They preserve it in comfort and good living, in idleness and dangerous relations. They preserve it in neglecting their religious duties, profaning the sacraments, and calling the wrath of God upon themselves and upon their people. Who is responsible for it ? Catholics, who have the folly to gorge them with money and all the delicacies of the world, and to grant to them a confidence and liberty which they abuse to the detriment of their souls.

When I see priests, with their pockets full of money, indulging in idleness, wines, liquors, good meals and society with women whose weakness they know from the confession-box, saying to the people :—" Look at me, I am an angel ; come to me, I will forgive your sins ; " I turn with indignation to God and say : " O God ! is this thy work ? No, it cannot be ! " If bishops should tell me, for humiliation's sake, to go and bow before a swine, I would understand them and go. But, if they tell me to go and bow before a sensual, drunken and immoral priest, I cannot understand them, and I will not go.

Catholics may be sure that, in their present condition, their priests are generally nothing but quack-saviors, and that, in making them pay very dear for their masses and sacraments, they are nothing but money-making machines and a mass of corruption.

4th. I owe this to all the people and governments of the world. We are in an age of enlightenment and progress, where every abuse and fraud must be ventilated and destroyed. The immoral condition of catholic priests, their spirit of domination and intolerance, are a threat against the welfare of the people. This compels me to give a solemn warning to all the rulers of the earth. Beware of the intrigues and machinations of priests. Beware of their corrupt and corrupting power. Make the popes and priests understand that their kingdom is not of this world, and that this must be more than a mere word ; it must become an actual fact.

5th. I owe it to God, who hates hypocrisy and vice, whose people is scandalised, whose flock is scattered, whose temples are polluted, whose sacraments are profaned. God is a Holy God, and he wants only holy men to do his work. Let every Judas, who sells his body for

cash, while eating and profaning it, repent or hang himself by his own hands, that true apostles may render glory to his name.

In conclusion, Most Rev. Sir, I believe you to be a good bishop. There are other good bishops besides you. There are some good priests. There is no rule without an exception; and, if the rule is that Catholic priests are bad, there are exceptions, of course. With the concurrence of these good bishops and priests, might be formed a new clergy, according to the principles of Christ and of the apostles.

When I look at the chief apostles, I see that two of them have sanctified themselves in different ways.

St. Peter, the first pope, was a father of a family. He had a daughter by the name of Petronilla, who became a saint, and is feasted by Catholics on the 30th of June. You see that it is possible to be an apostle and to have a daughter, and that it is possible that the father and the child should both be placed on the altars as saints of the church. Would it not be better that your priests should be legally husbands and fathers, rather than to expose them, by the vain raiment of virginity, to scandalize their people by their immoralities or the hiding or killing of their children?

St. Paul had no Petronilla. But, to sanctify his soul, he declares his way to be: "I chastise my body and reduce it into servitude." If you want your priests to follow the ways of Paul, let them chastise their bodies and reduce them into servitude.

Let them, as in former ages, have neither gold nor silver. Let them not indulge in the delicacies of the world, in good cheer, wine and liquors. *In vino luxuria.*

Let them receive from their flocks only what is necessary for very simple living.

Let them keep wholly away from women. Let no servant girl, young or old, be allowed to them. Ah! that servant girl! that servant girl! I do not like to see her sleeping alone under the same roof with those angels!

So far as it may be necessary, let them have male servants. Have not Chinamen been providentially created to be the servants of priests? If there is a prohibition against further immigration of Mongolians, let an exception be made in favor of priests. Let them, two or three times a day, chastise their bodies with the lash; and, if they forget to do it, let the Chinaman have the charge to fulfil that function in their place. That is, Most Rev. Sir, the kind of priests, angels and saviors the people want. Give such a priesthood to the world; and, instead of the rascalities which we deplore every day, miracles of holiness will be multiplied among us, and God will be glorified.

Yours most respectfully,

P. M. CLERC.

On December 18, 1888, answering an invitation made to me by Methodist ministers to participate in their discussion on "Catholicism," I made the following address:

REVEREND GENTLEMEN:—You had the kindness to invite me to participate in your discussion on "*Catholicism*." I thank you heartily

for the honor, and I will try to do my best to tell you what I know on the subject. Gentlemen, I am sailing on the same boat as you. Because, on account of crimes not imputable to me, and of horrible persecutions, I resolved to abandon the Catholic priesthood and to make my living in an honorable way, I am persecuted, denounced and cursed as an apostate, a renegade, a real monster. So you are, my friends. In the belief and talk of Catholics, you are nothing but mercenaries and impostors. Your followers are dupes. You have no true religion nor holiness in you. Your marriages, not blessed by the pure hands of catholic priests, are concubinages, and your children are bastards. Your schools are godless and your government, corrupt. You are all condemned to go to hell, because they highly proclaim that "out of the Catholic church there is no salvation possible."

Is it possible? * * Is it possible that you, good ministers of the gospel, whether Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Baptists, etc., and your good and virtuous congregations should all be condemned to go to hell, and that the holy catholic priests and their holy flocks should have in reserve for themselves alone the eternal bliss of heaven? Is it possible? * * * No, it is not possible.

Some years ago, an Irish-Catholic man, who knows me as an ex-Catholic priest, asked of me in a public place the following question:—"Do you think, Professor, that it is possible to be saved out of the Catholic church?" "I think so," I answered. "I do not think so," he replied, emphatically. "Sir," I said, "I do not like to speak on religious subjects in public places. But, since you have the imprudence to put me to the wall, I will prove to you that your theory is absurd." "Prove it," said he. "Well, sir, these are my proofs:

"Do you admit that God is the creator and father of all men, and that he is a good father and a good God?" "Yes, sir, I admit it," he answered. "Well," I said, "let us look at the people of the globe. You say there are two hundred millions Catholics. This I positively deny. Is France Catholic? No, it is so in name, but not in fact. The three-fourths of the French population are free-thinkers and not Catholics. It is the same with the other old Catholic countries of Europe—Spain, Italy and Austria; I can prove it. Is England Catholic? No. Is Belgium Catholic? No. The majority are anti-Catholics. Are Holland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway Catholics? No, they are Protestants. Is Germany Catholic? No; out of its forty-five millions of inhabitants, hardly ten millions are Catholics; the others are protestants. Is Switzerland Catholic? No, the majority are Protestants. Is Russia Catholic? No, it is schismatic. Are the Turks Catholics? No, they are Mohammedans. Is Asia Catholic? No, it belongs to Mohammed, Confucius or Buddha. Is Africa Catholic? No, it is either Mahomedan or idolatrous. Is Australia Catholic? No, it belongs to the religion of England or to idolatry. Is America Catholic? No, I grant you ten millions of Catholics in the United States out of sixty millions of inhabitants. The remainder is composed of Protestants, Jews and free-thinkers. Which, therefore, is Catholic? Ireland, Ireland alone—and, how is its Catholicism manifested? By drunkenness, riot, bloodshed, dynamite, murder, degradation. * * And you will tell me that only Catholics can be

saved, and that all those who are not catholics shall be damned !!! If it is so, God is not the good father of all men. If it is so, God is no God, he is a monster !!!”

The fellow did not answer me. I was applauded by the crowd. Since that time, that man has never addressed me in public on religious affairs.

Who are those men, who pretend to be the only representatives of God on earth, who assume the extraordinary power of sending their fellow-creatures to heaven or to hell, and who boldly affirm that, out of their society, there is no salvation possible?

Who are Catholics, and what is Catholicism?

Catholicism is very different from Christianity.

Catholicism resembles Christianity just as darkness resembles the light. Catholicism is the mimicry, the parody, the travesty of Christianity. Catholicity is no longer the religion of Christ.

The marks it gives of its divine character are mere impositions. Catholicism has been for ages and is still the curse of human kind. These are, gentlemen, the points I will submit to your judgment in the address you have allowed me to make to you on this occasion.

You are all well versed in the Bible and the history of the primitive church.

Did you ever read in the Bible or in the history of the church any article stating that Christ was a Catholic, and especially a Roman Catholic? Were the apostles and the first Christians Catholics, and especially Roman Catholics?

We all know the tenets of the Catholic church. Did ever Christ and the apostles celebrate mass with surplices, stoles and chasubles before six lighted tapers? Did they hear confessions in the confession-box? Did they ever rub the eyes, nostrils, mouth, ears, hands, feet and loins of the dying Christians, with oil blessed on Holy Thursday, to remove remainders of sin which they had been unable to remove by confession?

Did they offer mass for the dead suffering in the flames of purgatory, receiving one or five dollars for each mass?

Did they sell relics and indulgences? Did Jesus Christ eat his own body and drink his own blood at the last supper? Did Christ say: “I want to establish a church which will be called *holy, catholic, apostolic and Roman*, whose capital will be *Rome*, whose chief ruler will be called *pope*, which pope will live in a palace, having a body-guard, princes called cardinals, chamberlains, primates, archbishops, bishops, valets and priests—a pope having supreme power over all nations of the earth and even over their rulers, with the privilege to create or depose them at his will, and to excommunicate and interdict, according to circumstances, emperors, kings and nations—a pope having, besides, a temporal power with a little army of soldiers to kill Christians who would refuse obedience?

No. Assuredly, no. You never read anything of the kind. Every sincere Christian knows that Christ, after having declared that “his kingdom is not of this world,” said: “Render to Cæsar what belongs to Cæsar; and to God what belongs to God.” Every sincere Christian knows that he ran away from the Jews, when they wanted to make him

a king, that he rebuked Peter for having drawn his sword in his defense and that, when he was overtaken by the Jews in the garden of Gethsemane, he said that, if he wanted, he could call to his rescue millions of good soldiers, called angels; but he did not want to do so.

His mission upon earth was a mission of holiness and peace. He came to purify the human heart, to implant in it ideas of humility, charity, purity, forgiveness, disinterestedness, self-denial, mortification of the body, exaltation of the faculties of mind and soul; and, to sanction his doctrine by his example, he made himself poor, not having a stone to rest his head upon; he was called the man of pain; he was born, not in a palace like the Vatican, but in a stable; he had for courtiers neither cardinals nor princes, but something far superior—two humble animals, an ox and an ass. His crown was made out of thorns, and his throne was a cross. He did not mean to establish his religion with the use of swords, by killing his enemies, but by sacrificing himself and dying; and, indeed, his sufferings and death were the royal means by which he conquered the world.

His first apostles and disciples understood his principles and followed his examples. They did not try to establish their power as kings and potentates. Their ambition was to conquer souls to their divine master, and to suffer and die for his love. They rejoiced in their tribulations and chains. They were making converts, not by the use of arms but by the power of their good example. "See how they love each other," exclaimed the astonished pagans. They were making converts by shedding their blood for the divine cause. "The blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians," such was the general saying.

At that time, Christianity was flourishing, because the spirit of Christ was still infused in his disciples; because his true doctrine was preached; because the corrupt human, or rather inhuman, Catholic institution was not yet invented.

Before that invention, nobody knew anything about the supremacy of the Pontiff of Rome. The patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch and Constantinople disputed it. Finally the bishops of Rome triumphed over them, and took the novel name of *Popes*. Then was created a kind of spiritual empire on the model of the Roman empire. By torturing the sense of the Scripture of which they pretended to be the sole interpreters, and relying on uncertain traditions imagined by ambitious monks and priests, popes declared themselves the vicars of Christ and his representatives on earth. They created cardinals, princes of the church, primates, archbishops, subordinate bishops and priests, the whole of it being organized as an army of celestial deputies having unlimited power all over the earth. On account of the ignorance of the time, they made the people believe that, in the same way as the soul is superior to the body, the spiritual power was superior to the temporal, and they organized a politico-religious system by which princes should be dependent upon kings, kings dependent upon emperors, and the whole crowd under the heels of the sovereign pontiff.

They went further. They pretended to have the right to be temporal kings, to have a little kingdom, a little army of soldiers, to declare peace or war, to foster intrigues among princes, to make alliances with or against nations and to go personally to war. Did not Pope Ju-

lius II take up a cuirass and arms and put himself at the head of an army to kill Christians? Did not, recently, Pope Pio IX raise a little army of pontifical zouaves, who, under the leadership of General De Lamoriciere, were ordered to kill Christians on the fields of Italy? Does not Pope Leo XIII claim, yet, the re-establishment of his temporal power with a little army, to have the pleasure to make use of a sword which Jesus Christ refused to Peter?

The fable speaks of Jupiter hurling the thunderbolt from the heights of heaven. Did not the popes pretend to be the Jupiters of the church, and to hurl the thunderbolts of excommunication and damnation over their enemies? Does not history mention three popes existing at the same time, one in France, one in Rome, and one in Spain, thundering at each other and sending each other to hell?

Ah! that savage institution, so different from the charitable and merciful institution of Christ, was not to last very long. What is divine remains. What is human perishes. Popery began to decay many centuries ago, and is now on the verge of its downfall. Human dignity was aroused. Schisms, heresies, arose. The Greek church seceded with Photius in Constantinople. Russia seceded. With Martin Luther, the greatest part of Europe seceded. And, in our times, the nations which have been for centuries the right arm of the church,—France, Italy and Spain—begin to secede. Rome itself, the center of Catholicity, does not want the Pope any more.

Singular spectacle, indeed! Twelve apostles, animated with the spirit of Christ, succeeded in converting the world. For ages, old Europe has been flooded with bishops, priests, monks and nuns of every shape and of every color. To-day, there are in France over forty thousand priests. The same amount exists in Italy, Spain, Germany and Austria. There are to-day over two hundred thousand priests in Europe, and Europe is infidel!!! What are these priests doing? Do they fulfil their duties? * * Shame to say, twelve apostles had the power to convert the world, and two hundred thousand Catholic priests have no other power than to make it infidel!!!

What kind of apostles are they?

It strikes me, Rev. Gentlemen, that the so-called Catholic church has entirely departed from the principles of the founder of Christianity. A matter of fact is that this church does not call itself any more *Christian*, but simply *Roman Catholic*.

It nevertheless assumes that it is the only divine church established by Christ, and gives the five following marks of its divine institution: Unity, Holiness, Catholicity, Apostolicity, Romanism.

Do those marks prove the divinity of the Catholic church? Do they belong to it? I do not think so.

Unity may be one of the distinctive characters of the church of Christ. But it may be understood in different ways. Catholics pretend that, because they have a center of unity in the Pope, they have exclusively that mark of divine institution. But Protestants place the center of unity in Christ himself, in whom all believe, though they may interpret differently secondary points of his doctrine.

Have not Catholics their differences? Had they not three popes at at once? Had they not the long controversies between Thomists and

Scottists, between Gallicans and Ultramontanes, between fallibilists and infallibilists? Had not the dogma of infallibility a great many opponents among Catholic bishops who did not want to submit, even after the proclamation of the infallibility and who, to my knowledge, submitted only when they were threatened with excommunication?

Catholics have their differences, just as Protestants have theirs. These differences of opinion do not destroy the unity of the church. Christ spoke in a general and broad manner, often in parables, so that his doctrine might be interpreted according to the turn of mind of different nationalities, and adapted to their different characters. The diversity of trees and flowers embellishes a garden, and does not prevent it from being a unique, beautiful garden. So it is with the difference of opinion in the church.

Holiness is assuredly a character of the church of Christ, but is not the distinctive mark of the Catholic church. Are not Protestant ministers and Jewish rabbis, are not Protestant and Jewish families as holy in their doctrines, ceremonies and lives as Catholic priests and their flocks? I have associated with Protestants and Jews for about fifteen years, and I emphatically declare that I have found Protestants and Jews if no more, at least as good, as just, as charitable, as moral, as religious as the great bulk of Catholics.

Apostolicity may be also a mark of the catholic church. But has the catholic church that mark more than other churches? Had it not three popes at once? Which was the real one? Had it not interregnums? Protestant ministers have been ordained by men who had been ordained by Catholic bishops. Before separating from Rome, they were apostolic. Did they lose that character, when they departed? Myself, I was never suspended nor excommunicated. Am I not apostolic as well as Archbishop Riordan and Pope Leon XIII?

Catholicity is a great nonsense, because it means that the Church covers the whole world. Was ever the Church of Rome really Catholic? Is it so now? Is not Protestantism as widely spread as Catholicism? Do not the religions of Mahommed, Confucius and Brahma, cover as large an area as the Catholic church?

Romanism is the last mark of the Divinity of the Catholic church. Through generosity, I feel inclined to concede to it that title; but unfortunately the Romans do not want it. They do not want any more Popery or Catholicism, and the poor old idol of the Vatican is looking for a throne in the moon above.

Roman Catholics, strip yourselves from these marks of divinity which you have not. If you want to be known such as you really are, in place of those ungrounded marks, write around the walls of your churches the following marks which everybody attributes to you.

"Assumption, pride, avarice, bigotry, hypocrisy, intolerance, cruelty." Such are the real characteristics of your church.

You boast that you have rendered immense services to humanity. But you do not mention the disasters which your wicked passions have brought over the world. You do not mention the horrors of long religious wars, nor the infamies of the inquisition.

While Saint Paul says that we are called to the liberty of the children of God, you want to enslave minds and consciences. You con-

denn all means of progress. You show yourselves the enemies of all liberties, liberty of thought, liberty of conscience, liberty of the press, liberty of education.

(If you doubt it, you may consult your syllabus.)

Has not always your church sided with tyrants against oppressed people? Has not the union of the altar and throne been consecrated for a long time as a principle?

Nowadays, when we see European nations try to shake off the yoke of superannuated tyrants; when kings, queens and emperors are trembling on their uncertain thrones; do we not see Pope Leo XIII give them a helping hand? Is it not what he is doing with the queen of England, the emperor of Germany and the czar of Russia? Does he not even court the favor of the sultan of Constantinople and of the emperor of China?

Modern ages aspire to liberty. Popery aspires to tyranny. It is the reason why Catholicism has lost its grip on Europe, where it is justly considered as a plague and a scourge. It is the reason why Romanism throws its covitous eyes upon a new world which it wants to exploit? It is the reason why, being played out in Europe, it wants to take hold of the fat and beautiful pasturages of America.

Catholic priests are sharp. They know that this new country is disposed more than any other to receive religious teachings, and they want to indoctrinate it. Irish catholics emigrate here in large numbers and multiply in a prodigious way. Their number ranges already between seven or eight millions. Many poor catholics, French, Spanish, Italians, Poles, etc., flow here from all parts of Europe. As most of them come without any resources or any knowledge of the usages and language of the country, they feel the need to go to religious circles for aid and information. Their dirty clothing does not allow them to go to fashionable Protestant churches, and they go to lower regions, called *Catholic regions*. There they register and there they remain. Under the instructions of priests, they become naturalized; they join a semi-politico-religious party called "*democratic party*," composed of southern rebels and European emigrants, who receive, on the sly, the inspiration of priests, without knowing their ultimate designs. Protestant and Jewish politicians fall into their traps. Even American newspapers, to obtain or keep their patronage, do not dare to oppose them.

Friends, this is the foe you have to combat. Up to the present time you have imagined it was not dangerous. * Be careful.

Napoleon the first, with a small army of well organized soldiers, conquered all combined Europe. Catholicism is your common enemy. Though it is not yet very large in number, it is well organized, and every member of the church is bound to discipline, the faithful obeying the priest, the priest obeying the bishop, and the bishop, the pope.

It is true that you are morally united by your belief in Christ and the fundamental principles of Christianity. But you have not the external union which Catholics have.

I entreat you to close your ranks and to have a common understanding against your common enemy. You know, as well as myself, that "*in union is force*." Keep that in view. *By that sign you shall conquer.*

III.

General Considerations on Catholic Priesthood.

It is an undeniable fact that the old Catholic countries of Europe, which have been, for centuries, under the control of millions of priests and monks, have degenerated from their primitive faith and have become the most incredulous in the world. Why so? Because they have been scandalized by those monks and priests.

France has been for a long time a Catholic country in the hands of priests. Is there any country where so much indifferentism, irreligion and incredulity prevail? How may we account for it?

Italy has been for a long time a catholic country. What is to-day the religion of Italy? Are the descendants of Victor-Emmanuel and of Garibaldi the worshippers of the pope? Do the Romans bless or curse His Holiness?

Spain has been for a long time a Catholic country. What is to-day the religion of Spain? I proclaim, without being afraid of contradiction, that irreligion, indifferentism and incredulity prevail there as well as in France and in Italy. To any one who doubts my word, I give the advice to read on this subject a book entitled "*Traveling in Spain*," by Theophile Gauthier. What is the cause of it? The scandals of the clergy.

I may make an exception in favor of Ireland ; but it is no credit to the priests. If the people of that island have kept their primitive faith, it is not because their priests are more holy than in any other part of the world, but because their worshippers have been kept in such a state of ignorance and superstition that they consider their priests as their gods. They kneel down before them even in the streets. They consider them as impeccable; and, if they find some of them guilty, they are taught that it is an act of religion deserving the crown of heaven to throw on their sins the mantle of charity and to keep them secret. This is done by the old folks born in Ireland. But, it is no more done by the Irish born in America. The latter do not kneel any more before their priests in the streets. Many dare to look at them in the face, with the idea that they have the same nature as any human being and are subject to the same weaknesses.

How is it that men who consecrate themselves to God and to the salvation of souls do precisely the work of the devil?

If we study how priests are recruited and ordained, and in what condition they are thrown into the world after their ordination, we shall easily understand how naturally they are brought to such disorderly life.

With a few exceptions, priests are recruited from the lower and poorer classes of society. Those having charge of parishes are directed to look for young subjects who may be fit to become one of them. The

parents and children are invited to the parsonage. The advantages of the vocation are demonstrated. As a matter of course, the glorification of God and sanctification of souls are brought forward. This, at first sight, looks grand and honorable. But what strikes most the minds of the parents and of the young ones is what follows :

The priests have a very easy and happy life. They are honored in their parishes. They command and they are obeyed. They are not obliged to work to earn their daily bread ; the people work for them. Money is generously tendered to them. All the goods of the earth flow in abundance to their homes. A good table, the best wines and liquors, a comfortable house gratuitously supplied, nothing is wanting to them. They look like little kings in their little parishes. They have nobody to control them, not even the bishop, who leaves them perfectly quiet, if they do not trouble his rest, and send regularly to him his *cathedrat-icum*.

Assuredly the situation is tempting. The parents are tempted, because they hope they will receive some assistance from their sons, when they will have a good position. The children, who know nothing but the advantages of the situation, are also tempted. If they cannot pay for their education, collections are made in churches in their behalf. So they go to the seminary. I do not mean to say that a vicious education is given to them. Assuredly their educators mean well. They try to purify their motives, if those motives are not found entirely pure. They teach them how to resist the bad passions of their hearts, and how to fight the flesh, the world and the devil. They give them the sacred orders. But, before sending them to the world, as they are to be the spiritual physicians of souls, they make to them, for some months, a regular course of spiritual medicine. To cure the diseases of the soul, they must know them. Therefore, all the evil which is done in the world, in every condition of life, is revealed to them. I remember that I was horrified when I heard all those horrors. With such good instructions and the grace of God which is promised to them, if they correspond to it, they are thrown into the world.

In the beginning, most of them are in a good faith and show themselves as true ministers of God. But they come in contact with the old ones, who sometimes deride their simplicity and youth. They are not long without observing that the theory taught in the seminary and the practice in parishes are things very different. Instead of finding holy men around them, they discover that the clergy is a true wicked world, contaminated with all the passions which they are destined to combat—pride, envy, jealousy, slander, contention, fighting, ambition, avarice, sensuality, drunkenness, immorality. Their good faith is shaken, and the number is small of those who go, without danger, through those influences, and those which are in wait for them in the discharge of their functions.

When priests are placed over the people, with such honors as they receive, their hearts are puffed up with pride. What is more proud and more domineering than a Catholic priest ? Who can resist a priest ? Who has not experienced the effects of his pride and of his insolence ?

Pride is the mother of all vices. Once in possession of their heart, pride pushes them to ambition. Who is the priest who does not con-

tinually dream of a large parish? Ambition and covetousness are sisters. Not only a large parish is coveted, but a rich and lucrative one. If there is any chance to obtain one, how many flatteries and intrigues will assail the bishop? If there is no chance, the bishop is an object of attack and continual mockery. If a priest obtains some special favor, I pity him; all the bullets of envy will fall upon him! How many priests have been ruined and destroyed by the calumnies of their fellow-priests! How many bishops, especially in America, have been obliged to leave their dioceses, on account of the persecutions of their priests! It must be known that, in America, bishops are not the rulers of their dioceses, but mere tools in the hands of priests, who, after having formed strong rings among themselves, give to the bishops the direction they please; and, if the bishops do not follow their ways, they threaten to not support them. How many priests are left in their functions, only because bishops do not know what to do with them and are afraid of scandal! How many priests remain in office only to make their living, and how many would leave the altar, if they knew what to do in the world! How many times I have heard Catholics who were aware of these facts, exclaim with sorrow: "Oh, I pity the bishops! What a hard job they have with their priests!"

Being independent of their bishops, they soon become independent of their people. They look at them as at an ignorant flock which is obliged to give to them its wool and milk, in exchange for a lean spiritual nurture which is parsimoniously granted. In the opinion of priests, the people ought not to know much. To dominate them better, they must be kept in ignorance, and the preachers will have a better opportunity to indulge in laziness. And how many priests I have heard saying; "I do not want to study any more; I know more than is necessary for my parishioners." Many priests have mocked me, when I told them I was preparing my sermons. They never prepare theirs. Two or three minutes of reflection enable them to throw a few generalities to the avidity of their flocks. After that, they go to take a rest. They indulge in good cheer, wine and liquors. They pass their time in smoking, drinking, gambling, gossiping or sleeping. Such is their holy life.

It is very rare to see a Catholic priest a friend of study. It is very rare to see one reading the Bible. How many are quite strangers to the Bible! How many have lost even the habit of prayer!

That life of pride, ambition, covetousness, jealousy, independence of the bishop and of their parishioners, that love of good living and idleness announces already a great peril for the virtue of those priests.

What becomes of that virtue, when they are continually obliged to hear, in the confession-box, the sins of their fellow-men; when they are obliged to hear the most horrible details in the life of married men and women, young men, young ladies, sinners of every kind? Will not the remembrance of these details come to their minds in their moments of idleness and drunkenness and poison their souls? If a miracle of grace does not keep them in duty, are they not tempted to indulge in their passions? They know the weaknesses of everybody. They have the confidence and sometimes the love of their people, and they know it. They

know that many weak minds love the forbidden fruit, and that, precisely because the priests have made a vow of chastity, some hearts are more intensely inflamed for them. Then, if they choose to make a victim, they can easily find one. If, through prudence, they do not commit themselves, their minds are poisoned, and the flower of their virtue is gone.

Moreover, they are obliged to recite every day their Breviary, containing seven parts, called seven hours. The omission or recitation with distraction of each hour constitutes a deadly sin. They every day offer the sacrifice of mass and administer the sacraments. For all those functions, they must not have a single mortal sin on their conscience, and they must be pure like angels. If they are not so, they commit sacrileges and profane the sacraments.

Light is incompatible with darkness and sanctity with iniquity. How can they conciliate these things in their conscience? They feel that they are guilty, that they are no more in the grace and friendship of God. In the beginning, they may feel some trouble and remorse. But by degrees, they do not feel them. Accustomed to ill treat sacred things, they begin to distrust their reality; then they doubt; then they do not believe; then they become perfectly incredulous. How many priests I have heard raising doubts and unfavorably arguing on the principal points of the Catholic doctrine, on the Incarnation, the sacrifice of Mass, the Eucharist, the Sacraments, the Indulgences, the Virgin Mary, the Purgatory and Hell, the authority of the pastors of the church! How many I have heard mocking and cursing their bishops, whom they called fools and tyrants!!!

In consequence of that disposition of mind and incredulity, their life is nothing any more but a life of hypocrisy; they indulge secretly in all the bad passions of their hearts, and their only object is to make *a business* out of their sacred functions. The church is nothing any more but a *shop* where they make money. Their only object is to enrich themselves, and to enjoy life in the best way they can.

Where are the priests poor? Who does not deplore their rapacity in the discharge of their sacred functions? No low mass, unless you pay one dollar. No high mass, unless you pay five dollars. No baptism, unless you pay three dollars. No marriage, unless you pay ten dollars. No dispensation, unless you pay ten, twenty, a hundred or two hundred dollars, according to the case. Give money to the priests, and you will obtain every favor—of eating meat on Fridays, of marrying your relatives, of working on Sundays. With money, you will get plenary indulgences and avoid the flames of purgatory.

I have heard a great many priests say that, when they were short of masses, they used to preach a good sermon on purgatory, and that many good hearts, who wanted to deliver their relatives and friends from the horrible flames, rushed to them with their hands full of money to order masses.

Besides a splendid residence, well furnished at the expense of their parishioners; besides the price of their masses, christenings and marriages, they want a salary of one thousand dollars a year.

Twice a year, at Christmas and Easter Sunday, they make, in their churches, for their own benefit, a collection, which, in their estimation,

must produce a sum of five hundred dollars each time. And to obtain that sum, this is the way I have seen it practiced by an Irish priest of the State of New York. He announces that collection several Sundays in advance. He says that he will take it up himself, that he will be followed by a secretary provided with a register, that all those who will give one dollar and above will be registered with the amount given, and that, on the next Sunday, their names and offerings will be published from the pulpit. He adds that no mention will be made of those who give less than one dollar, and that an offering of fifty cents is considered as nothing—and what is published is executed.

What a torture for the poor Irishmen! There are some laborers who earn only two dollars a day and even less and who are obliged to support a wife and five or six children. There are poor servant girls who are obliged to save three-fourths of their earnings to support their old father and mother; and, though they are already overtaxed for the pew-rents, the collections of every Sunday, the christenings, masses, marriages, funerals and different sodalities, they see themselves obliged to give twice a year, as a present to the priest, a big sum of money! If they do not do it, they will be an object of contempt and mockery, they will be reputed stingy and mean, they will meet the dark frowns of the pastor, their children will be neglected or unjustly punished! What a torture for those poor Irish people! They murmur in secret; but, for their honor and the interest of their children, they give. They give in murmuring, but they give.

After the collection is made and counted, the priests who have gathered the most money boast of their success. They are reputed to be smart and capable. In the eyes of the bishop, they deserve to rule a large parish, as if the whole merit of the priest were to be able to raise money. In their own eyes, they are more intelligent than their fellow-priests less lucky, and, consequently, surround them with a kind of commiseration. On the other hand, the priests less fortunate groan and complain—“*That does not pay!*” they say in their abjection, “*my masses, marriages and collections do not pay!*”

On telling one of those priests that I was receiving only fifty cents for each of my masses, he said: “You cannot say a good mass for fifty cents. A fifty cent mass is not good.” So, if you have not one dollar to give to those big priests for each of their masses, they will condemn your poor father and mother to remain a little longer in the flames. And, on telling him I baptized for one dollar, the same priest said: “I never baptize for less than three dollars.” So, in the creed of those big priests, three dollars are necessary to open the doors of the church, and to give the right to pay for all the masses, sacraments and indulgences in possession of the church, and to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

I heard that a part of the collections made for the Pope and other religious purposes does not go to its destination, but is kept for private use, and that some priests keep for themselves the stolen money, which is restituted in their own hands by the means of confession.

Where does all that money go? Some priests put it in the banks, buy houses and lands; some enrich their families; some dissipate it in parties and enjoyments of all kinds. The liquor stores have a great part

of it. How many barrels of whiskey, sherry, claret and brandy are swallowed up by those throats continually dried by talking, smoking and even by the drink itself? There is no house where as much whiskey is drunk as in that of priests. Many times, I had a good opportunity to laugh, when I saw poor Irish drunken men and women come to take the pledge from those drunken priests. After a few jokes, those priests began to rinse their mouths with water in order to destroy the smell. Then they went with majesty to the miserable sinners. The latter knelt before a crucifix. They made a little prayer in which they promised not to touch a drop of liquor until the next time. Finally they gave to the priests a few dollars as a punishment for their gluttony and a pledge of their repentance, saying, "Take it, father, I would drink it; I prefer you to have it than those bad houses," and the priests took the money. They returned to their smoking and drinking room, and, continuing their libations, they said laughingly, "How stupid they are."

Such is the way those priests fulfill their sacred duties.

When I was in New York, I read in the *Catholic Reflector* a very strong article against American priests, written by Louis Veuillot, chief editor of the Catholic paper *L'Univers*. That article denounced, in violent terms, the corruption of American priests, their idleness, the abuse they make of their people, their too great freedom, the too large amount of money they dispose of, their lack of zeal and of sacerdotal spirit, all their efforts being limited to say mass, marry, baptize, bury and to be paid for it. That article, which can be found in the *Catholic Reflector*, (either in 1871 or 1872), was rebuked by an American priest. But, by what I know, Louis Veuillot was right.

What is the religious zeal of those priests? They teach that, out of the Catholic church, there is no salvation possible. If they believe it, why are they not more ardent to convert Protestants, Jews and Gentiles? Do they try it? Are there many Jewish or Protestant families visited by Catholic priests with regard to the dearest interests of their souls? No; priests keep away from them, except in politics and when they need them for their own advancement.

And with regard to their own people, what are they doing to keep them in the way of righteousness? Happily for them, their people go to church, because they are afraid to go to purgatory or hell. If their people were not afraid of eternal damnation, their business would not be so flourishing, and many Catholic churches would fall into bankruptcy.

They say that Catholicism is spreading, and that many new dioceses are formed. This is not certainly owing to the zeal of priests, but to the natural causes which I have already mentioned. Whatever may be that apparent progress, the day will come when Americans will open their eyes as Europeans have opened theirs, and when, on account of the lack of zeal, good examples and disinterestedness of priests, the Catholicism of this country will resemble that of Europe, and degenerate into indifference, if not into irreligion.

The general considerations contained in this chapter give already an idea of the disease existing in the Catholic clergy. The details, which I will give, and which I have selected among the many contained in my former pamphlet, will reveal it more completely.

I pray the reader to believe, that, in giving these details, my intention is not to destroy in him the religious principles he may have received. Let every man love his God and try to be good, just, charitable, temperate and moral. Nothing is more enviable and more praiseworthy than the fear of God and the practice of virtue.

My present aim is only to unmask those criminal hypocrites who have the impudence to declare themselves the only representatives of God on earth, who condemn all those who do not bow before them, who are so cruel and so intolerant, and who want to put under their heels the whole world and especially this, our Protestant country.

Kind reader, while perusing the following pages, raise your heart to God; and, while you will tell him that you are willing to obey His law, conceive the greatest horror for the crimes I will relate, and the most profound contempt for the human monsters who are base enough to perpetrate them.

IV.

Depravity of the Catholic Priesthood in Europe.

From my infancy, my idea was to become a priest. My parents, though Catholics, did not care much to have me embrace that career, because they knew too much about priests. My father especially, whose only son I was, repeated to me incessantly, "I should prefer you to be an honest citizen, rather than a bad priest." But his good advices did not produce any effect on my mind. I was irresistibly drawn towards the priesthood. Knowing that there were bad priests, I wished to become a good one.

Yielding to my reiterated prayers, my father sent me to the seminary. There I saw nothing but the good and edifying, and was perfectly satisfied and happy.

Though several scandals were given in the diocese by Catholic priests, especially, (1) by a Mr. Arfeu, an ex-professor of rhetoric at the seminary, who had been obliged to run away for having ruined an honorable young girl; (2) by a Mr. Babb, who had been professor of literature at the same seminary and had abandoned the priesthood to enter the university; (3) by a Mr. Corniau, vicar of the church of Notre Dame of Dijon, who was suspended for cause of gross immorality; (4) by the pastor of Aubigny, who, though being fifty years of age, was presented with a little baby by his old servant-girl, forty-eight years of age, I felt entirely inclined to embrace the orders, and I entered the great seminary with the intention of becoming a good priest.

A few months before my ordination, however, a scandal of a more serious character threw me into great perplexity. A priest of fine appearance, by the name of Borne, pastor of the parish of Chaumont-le-Bois, near Chatillon-sur-Seine, was suspected by his parishioners of holding intimate relations with a young lady of his parish. The young men of the parish, to make everything more lovely, threw several times a bed of flowers on the road from the parsonage to the girl's residence. Finally, the girl was no more seen. Everybody was aware that she had a child. By and by, the girl appeared in public. On seeing her features, the people naturally asked: "Where is the child?" An inquiry was made. Witnesses were found who said, "we have seen the pastor very late at night doing something in the cemetery." A search was made, which resulted in the discovery, under a bush, of a fresh little grave containing a little child. A physician was called, who, after examination, certified that the child was born with all the conditions necessary to live, but had been violently suffocated immediately after his birth. The girl was examined and proved to have been confined. The priest was denounced and accused of complicity in the infanticide.

The gendarmes were summoned to come and take hold of him. For several days they searched for him in vain, because he had hid himself. "Where is he? Where is he?" was the general demand. Finally he was found. Where was he found? Nobody could guess. He had hidden himself in the very bed of his mistress, and there he was found by the gendarmes. When the news of his capture came to Dijon, with all the horrible circumstances, no one could control his hilarity. "*Per quæ peccavit homo, per hæc et torquetur*," such was the general saying.

The priest and the girl were both arrested under the charge of complicity in the infanticide. They were brought to Dijon amidst the sarcasms and blasphemies of the people. At that time, we did not dare to appear in the streets, because we were bound to hear these terrible vociferations, which I heard myself: "Death to the priests! Death to the murderers! They are all the same!"

The girl and the priest were both tried by a jury. The girl was sentenced to several years in jail. During the trial of the priest, the infuriated populace uttered no other words than these: "Death to the priest! Death to the priest!" and when the verdict was made public that the priest had been condemned to death, there was general applause, and the public conscience seemed to be relieved.

At that time, if I had not been engaged in the orders, I should probably have left the seminary. I communicated my trouble to my confessor, who told me: "Go ahead; do not be afraid, you will be a good priest." So, I remained in the seminary, and I was ordained a priest in the year 1857.

After my ordination, I was sent, as an assistant priest, to the little town of Nuits-sous-Beaune. I was quietly fulfilling my duties, when Mr. Garnier, the pastor of the town, took me apart with the other assistant priests, and made to us the following declaration:

"Mr. Thomas, pastor of Gilly, is an immoral priest. He has successively seduced two nuns of his parish, whom the convent has been obliged to recall on his account. His servant-girl was lately known to be pregnant. He sent her to Lyons to get rid of her child, and, upon her return, he took her again into his service. If he is not the father of the child, he approves of her conduct. In every respect, he is a bad priest."

The same declaration was repeated to all the priests of the canton. At the conference of Villy-le-Moutiers, where we all assembled, Mr. Thomas was put on the stand and compelled to confess his guilt. We made a petition to the bishop for his interdict and our petition was sent. But, Mr. Thomas was a talented priest. He was, besides, the friend of several dignitaries of the church. He was not interdicted; he was simply removed and appointed to one of the most lucrative parishes of the diocese. A few years after, he was transferred to a first-class parish; so that it was a common saying among priests: "Do you want to get a good parish? the only way is to make bastards."

Passing over other facts of the same nature which occurred in that locality during my sojourn in Nuits-sous-Beaune, I will quote a more serious fact which occurred in the same district, in the year of grace 1888. We read, indeed, in the *Le Petit Californien*, in its issue of August 12th last, the following item:

"The old abbey of Citeaux was converted, some forty years ago, into a penitentiary-agricultural colony, where young convicts are kept for correction until the age of twenty. Placed under the direction of the brothers of Saint Joseph and supported by the government, that colony was prospering and contained about a thousand children, when the discovery of acts of revolting immorality provoked in France great indignation. An inquest was ordered by the parquet of Dijon, and the result was that, during a long series of years, two hundred children, instead of becoming better, have been soiled and corrupted there, and the establishment has been a place of orgies organized by the brothers of Saint Joseph. The chamber of deputies, alarmed, has voted the urgency of a project of law taking away from religious congregations the direction of penitentiary-agricultural colonies. The inquest about the scandals of Citeaux has brought, up to this time, the arrest of five brothers. The police are looking for five others. Six others, who left the colony in 1886, are under arrest. A brother of Soissons has been arrested at the convent of Saint-Medard of Soissons and has confessed the facts which are imputed to him."

After having remained one year as an assistant priest in the town of Nuits-sous-Beaune, though being only twenty-five years of age, I was appointed pastor of the parish of Montagny-les-Beaune.

That poor parish had been upset by a miserable priest, whose name was Febvre. Many acts of immorality were imputed to him. He was even reputed to live in concubinage with his own sister. A young lady, by the name of Bouzereau, was taking care of his vestry-room and was remarked because of her assiduities to the pastor. As a reward for her kind attentions, the pastor found for her a good husband, whose name was Pallegoix. That man was a good Israelite, without any malice, and the people were saying that he had good shoulders and could easily carry the burdens of the priest. So, when the bride came to her term, many went to see the baby and found the resemblance perfect. He resembled, indeed, his father, the priest. They laughed. What could they do more? On that account, the husband Pallegoix received a funny nickname, and the priest continued his business.

As it may be seen, the priest had a big heart, affectionately opened to all. A servant-girl of the neighborhood became his favorite. Many little presents which appeared on her person attracted attention. All at once, she became sick, and, on the recommendation of the pastor, she was received at the hospital of Beaune and attended to by the sisters. What her sickness was was very soon found. The crime of abortion had been committed by some unknown person. When the girl recovered, a committee was appointed to induce her by all possible means to make her deposition. She confessed everything, and sent publicly back to the priest her silver comb, her bracelets and her ear-rings. An explosion of anger occurred in the parish and in all the neighborhood. The parishioners, so long scandalized, roared for justice, and a mob of about one hundred men, armed with sticks, ran to the parsonage. They whipped the priest, they spat on his face, as well as on the face of his sister. They threw his furniture out of the windows, and expelled him ignominiously. As the rumor was great, and as the sisters of the

hospital were implicated in the affair, the priests of the vicinity received the order to extenuate the facts from their pulpits. But it was of no avail. The guilty priest went to the bishop, crying for mercy. He was sent for eight days to a house of repentance. Afterwards, he was appointed to a nice parish in the canton of Chatillon-sur-Seine. There, if he is not dead, he preaches good morals and sanctifies souls.

When I was appointed to that parish, I was recommended not to allow anybody to speak to me about that priest. As I was very young, to put myself out of suspicion, I took into my service an old lady seventy-eight years old. Afterwards, I took with me my old father and mother, having nobody but them in my house.

To occupy my leisure time, and in conformity with the recommendations given to all priests, I formed in my house a little class consisting of four boys, whom I taught French, Latin and Greek, and whom I destined for the seminary.

By and by, I heard that some people found fault that I kept in my house a particular little boy. I did not know the true motive of it, until my mother revealed it to me. I knew that the mother of the boy had been accused of ill conduct with the priest Febvre; but, as I had no proof that the boy was the son of the priest, I kept him in my house.

Three years after, the priest Febvre came to see his former parish. He paid me a visit and wanted absolutely to see the boy. The boy was called. The priest looked at him again and again and finally kissed him. I was really amazed to see such resemblance between the boy and the priest. When the priest had taken leave of me, many people, and especially Mr. De Charodon, the brother-in-law of General De Cissey, Ex-Minister of War, came to me, saying: "How did you dare "to receive that scandalous priest in your house? Did you not remark "his resemblance to the little Pallegoix?—the same hair, the same forehead, the same nose, the same cheeks, the same eye-brows, the same "mouth? We have all noticed that for a long time, and we notice "it now more than ever. For your honor, do not receive that priest in "your house any more."

I was troubled in mind and conscience. I then became disgusted with the child. I said to the mother that he was not fit to become a priest. She cried. Her ardent desire was to make him a priest. She had gone to consult on that subject the holy Cure d'Ars, and the holy priest had advised her to consecrate him to God. She was disposed to make any sacrifice to attain that end; and, in fact, at the re-opening of the schools, she sent him to the seminary of Plombieres-les-Dijon. But, soon the rumor spread out, even among the seminarians, that he was the son of a priest, and he could not be kept in the diocese of Dijon. He was sent to the seminary of Avignon, to complete his studies. From that time, I did not hear of him. He was a relative of Mgr. Pallegoix, late bishop of Siam.

During my sojourn in the parish of Montagny, I was called to witness a great many things no less sad and strange, which for brevity's sake, I must pass over. Here is, however, a fact which I cannot overlook:

The parish of St. Mary-sur-Ouche, which was adjoining mine, had been, some years before, the witness of one of the most horrible crimes that a priest can commit. The priest of that parish had a servant-girl about whom something mysterious was said. What the mystery was nobody knew exactly. All that was known was the following frightful result: One day, in the morning, as some people were going to the river which flowed below the village, they perceived in the water a sack stained with blood, and some blood escaping from it. A crime was immediately suspected and the sack was brought to the bank of the river. What an horrible spectacle! It was the bloody corpse of a woman cut into pieces; her arms, head, legs and body being all mutilated. The head was recognized as being the head of the servant of the priest. An entrance was made into the house of the assassin. But he was not there. The bloody traces and the instruments of his crime only were found. The pastor had escaped. He was passing to Italy, when he was caught by the police, tried and condemned to death.

I remember still with horror the frightful details of the trial, the pictures circulating publicly, representing the priest, dressed in his cassock, choking his servant-girl, mutilating her bloody limbs, putting them in a sack and carrying them on his shoulders to the river below.

The young generation has still that horrible crime present to its mind. There is no parish more impious and more incredulous. I preached in that parish on a feast-day. During the night, while many people were at rest and others were drunk and disorderly, a fire broke out in the dancing-hall, and the whole village was destroyed. It was commonly said it was a punishment from God for the crimes committed by priests, and for the impiety of the people.

After five years' residence in the parish of Montagny, I was appointed to the parish of Prenois, near Dijon. That parish had been scandalized for many years by an old priest, called Ormancey. His principal fault was to drink to excess, and, for that fault, he had been suspended. He was living in the same parish with an old female companion, in an old shanty which he owned. Though he was degraded, and was many times found lying drunk in the streets, pursued and hooted at by children, he provoked still some sympathy, and many good souls endeavored to relieve him. I tried to raise him from his abjection. I went to see him. I invited him to come and see me. I made him believe that, if he should behave, the bishop would restore him to his functions and that I would help him with all my power. Gradually, the old priest ceased to drink. He came again to the church, from which he had been absent for several years. He listened regularly to my sermons, which he admired for their simplicity and solidity. During Lent, in a revival, I endeavored to convert the ex-pastor as well as the flock. And I succeeded, indeed; for, on Easter Sunday, I had the consolation of seeing the old pastor and almost all my parishioners receive from me the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist. I cannot remember without emotion that day, one of the happiest of my life, when, after the divine service and a few words appropriate to the occasion, all my people, like myself, were shedding tears through gratitude to God for the renovation of the parish.

When everything was so encouraging for me, I had the sorrow to contemplate the most horrid clerical scandals in the parishes surrounding mine. I will not say all; I will only dwell on three instances of iniquity.

In the parish of Malain, situated on the railroad line from Paris to Lyons, there was living an old priest, about sixty years of age, by the name of Couhard. Though old, he was an immoral man. The priests themselves accused him of having successively seduced three of his female teachers. The people of Malain had often petitioned the bishop for his removal. But, as he was rich and influential, and as he knew something about the bishop who had been with him employed in the diocese of Versailles, the bishop did not dare to touch him.

Once, a deputation of the parish, composed of the mayor and supervisors, went to the bishop, asking his removal. They recited their motives, and the bishop listened to them attentively. They thought they had gained their cause, when His Lordship, looking at them with a smile, told them, "I see, my friends, that your pastor is very guilty. I will therefore give him the greatest punishment a man can receive. I will leave him in the middle of his enemies."

There was no reply possible. The authorities of the village left the bishop with contempt, and waited for a better opportunity. The opportunity was not long in coming. The pastor, knowing the answer of the bishop, became bolder than ever. As he had some fear that an assault would be made on his house, he prepared himself to resist the force. He bought guns and pistols, swords and daggers, and placed them in position in every part of the house. I heard him once threatening with death whomsoever would attempt to act against him. No violence was made to him. But a very appropriate attack came from his female teacher, who declared herself to be pregnant by him. The pastor repelled the accusation, charging it to his enemies. Nobody could tell the truth, until the girl was confined. At that very moment, we were obliged to go to the house of that priest for an ecclesiastical conference. As we were passing through the vineyards, we were saluted all along the road with these amiable expressions: "See the Calottins; they go to the christening of their child." We were ashamed. We wrote to the bishop that we did not want to go any more to the house of that priest, whom we believed to be guilty.

When the girl was restored to health, she began a lawsuit against the priest. The case was called before the supreme court of Dijon and a verdict was rendered against the priest. The bishop was obliged to suspend him for eight days. He sent him to a monastery to make some expiation for his little sins. Afterwards, he appointed him to the large parish of Mennessaire, near his own village and his large properties.

A little further, in the village of Fleurey-sur-Ouche, was a priest with the name of Moriseau. About fifteen years before, he had been expelled from the diocese for immorality. He came to America and founded a parish in the city of New Orleans, where he remained over ten years. What he did in that parish, I cannot say. All I know is, that, during the civil war between the North and the South, he returned to France with an yearly income of two thousand dollars. He bought,

in the village of Fleurey-sur-Ouche, a magnificent residence. He was leading a very high life and living like a prince. He had three servant-girls, especially a beautiful young creole whom he had brought with him from New Orleans. That beautiful creole was often seen driving with him in the streets. Dressed sometimes as a priest, sometimes as a hunter, with a gun on his shoulder and dogs at his sides, he was uniting in himself the life of a monk with the life of a man of pleasure. He was generally called a *pique-assiette*, and known as drinking very hard. Once, during a revival in the church of Velars-sur-Ouche, he entered the church in a state of complete drunkenness and fell flat on the pavement of the church. The people were obliged to help him to get upon his feet. He was carefully taken to the vestry-room, thence to the pastor's house. The pastor was indignant, and that scandal injured his revival a great deal. Yet, a person was touched by the grace of God. The young and beautiful creole went for confession to a father Jesuit. The order was given to her to leave the house of the priest. She left him, in fact, to lead a holy life. But, by and by, as she said, she felt lonesome and without friends, and she returned to her vomit. She remained with the priest, until he was attacked by a violent sickness. At his death-bed, he became repentant. He asked the bishop to send him his pardon and blessing. The bishop sent him both, with a picture signed by his own hand; and the priest died with true signs of repentance, bequeathing to his lovely creole an yearly income of one hundred dollars.

A little further, in the village of Saint Mary-sur-Ouche, was another priest about thirty-eight years of age. His name was Aubelle. He was born in Dijon. His family was very well known. He had been educated by a priest called Lebeuf, before the latter had been raised to the dignity of vicar-general. I knew nothing about this Mr. Aubelle, whom I considered as a big priest.

In the month of July, 1867, that priest invited me to pay him a visit. He had built a beautiful church and a beautiful residence, which he wanted to show me. I answered his invitation. What occurred in his house, when I was there, is described in my former pamphlet, and has been read by a great many. My friends have advised me, through decency, not to publish the details, which I can give to anybody who wants to know them. All that I can say is that this priest Aubelle tried, persuasively at first, forcibly afterwards, to commit on me infamous acts of sodomy.

The next day, I went to see the priest of Lantenay, who was my neighbor and who had in his company another priest, the pastor of Baulme-la-Roche. I told them what that miserable priest had attempted to do to me. They answered me that they were not astonished at it, because he had done the same thing to other priests and even to the teacher of his village. They advised me to go to the bishop and to tell him my story. I told them I would go.

I went to see the bishop and gave him all the details of that strange affair. His Lordship listened to me attentively and said conclusively: "We shall call Mr. Aubelle and question him; afterwards, we shall call both of you to the officiality."

Aubelle was called several times to the house of the bishop. As there were a great many charges against him, he had a hard time. A countryman of mine, named Babuteau, whose brother-priest was my friend, and who was living just opposite the house of the bishop, told me that he saw Aubelle go many times out of the house of the bishop, sad, humiliated and down-hearted.

However, things were going on very slowly. Aubelle had many influential friends in Dijon. The vicar-general had educated him and was his protector. As the trial was delayed too long, I went to see the bishop and complained of being distrusted. The bishop told me candidly, "we know that Mr. Aubelle is guilty, but he is from Dijon. He has here a large and influential family and a great many friends. If we suspend him, what will become of him and what will the feelings of his family and friends be? If we interdict him, he will come to drag his cassock in the streets of the city and be a cause of scandal to the church." I answered the bishop: "My Lord, I have done my duty. All I have to do now is to leave the matter in your hands. If you want to keep that man in office, it is your affair. As for me, I cannot remain any more in his neighborhood. I cannot associate with him any more. As the accusation I have made against him is known to a great many priests, I am sure he has not very good feelings for me, and I would be afraid to meet him alone in the midst of a forest. I finally insinuated to the bishop that I should be very glad to be appointed to another parish far from that priest, and His Lordship promised me kindly to do so.

The next day, the bishop, probably to lull me asleep, sent me the following letter written in French, but correctly translated into English:

DIJON, Sept. 23d, 1867.

REVEREND DEAR SIR: (*Monsieur le cure.*)

I forgot yesterday to pray you to address to me (in a sealed letter) in writing, the verbal complaint which you have committed to us, concerning that *miserable* Mr. A. You have alluded to it, fifteen days ago, in one of your letters, and you expressed your indignation that we were maintaining such a man in his functions. We have given notice to Mr. A. of your verbal accusation. He has repelled it violently, and has told us that he would defy you to renew it in his presence. As we had nothing in our hands to second your words, and, as we were expecting *some information from elsewhere*, we went no further. But, we cannot let you go without asking from you a detailed deposition, written and certified by you, in order that we may make use of it at the opportune time. I understand that it is painful for you to make such a deposition. But you will understand also that such a deposition is indispensable in enabling us *to act*, when the circumstances will allow us to do it. You shall indicate A. but by this initial, and you shall send me those notes in a *sealed* letter as soon as possible.

Anew, my dear pastor, the assurance of the paternal affection of your bishop.

† FRANCIS, Bishop of Dijon.

After reception of that letter, I sent, in writing, all the details of the affair. I requested the bishop to place me in the presence of Au-

belle. I asked for the convocation of an ecclesiastical tribunal. I offered to sustain before that tribunal and before Mr. Aubelle himself the accusation I had made against him by word and in writing and to compel Mr. Aubelle to confess his guilt in my presence.

My letter remained unanswered. The bishop was old and weak and did not know what to do. The case was a monstrous one, and one of the most embarrassing that has perhaps occurred in the history of the church. A priest was accusing another priest of having attempted on him infamous acts of sodomy. By the talk of imprudent priests, the case had become known to more than six hundred priests and some people out of the clergy. It was very humiliating for the church to acknowledge, by a condemnation, that such a crime might have been committed.

So, devices were resorted to, to palliate the thing. At first, the trial was postponed under the pretext that there was not enough evidence. Afterwards, the vicar-general, who was accused by the clergy and the people of protecting such a scandalous priest, as well as others, conceived the infernal project of destroying me, in order to save the honor of his friend and his own, and to crush down my terrible accusation. As I had had the imprudence to ask for another parish, the vicar-general seized that opportunity to appoint me to a parish teeming with difficulties, which, as it will be seen, he intended to increase, in order to lessen my reputation, to destroy my reliability, and to make fall aground the accusation I had made against his friend Aubelle.

The name of that parish was Bourberain. The male teacher of Pr  nois had been a teacher in that parish. He knew and told me all about it. The village was divided into two strong factions on account of two nuns who had charge of the school of the girls, and had not a shadow of piety and of religious decency.

Those nuns had for them the mayor, the justice of the peace and all the riffraff of the population. As they had some knowledge of medicine, and attended to the sick, giving to them medicines gratuitously, they had, among the poorer class, a kind of popularity. They had against them the old pastor of the village, seconded by the best and most religious element of the parish, and all the priests of the canton, especially the good and honorable priest of Fontaine-Francaise. During several years, the nuns had been in a frightful struggle with the old pastor of the village. Finally that priest had succeeded in obtaining their removal. But the other faction had been no less successful in recalling them. A terrible war ensued between them and the pastor, until the latter died, it was said, from grief and sorrow. The nuns were reputed to have danced on his grave. The parish had been left six months without a priest, and the passions were yet in all their effervescence, when the vicar-general had the kindness to appoint me to it.

I refused—I persistently refused. I went to the bishop, crying and begging him not to send me there. All my efforts were in vain; I was obliged to obey.

Though with repugnance, I went to see the place. I was introduced to the mayor and to the sisters. My candid air, a kind of generous appearance, pleased them immediately.

Perhaps they judged that they could easily turn me to their wicked designs. The authorities of the village were convoked, and it was resolved that six farmers should go, at the expense of the village, with six chariots, to transfer my furniture from Prenois to Bourberain. I accepted the proposition. I was glad that my new parishioners should come to Prenois and see how I was respected and loved. When they came, indeed, all my parishioners came in turn to offer me the homage of their respect and affection. The married men came, their wives came, the young men came, the young girls came, the young children came; and, when the moment of my departure arrived, all my parishioners ranged themselves into two lines on each side of the road, bidding me good-bye with tears in their eyes, and uttering words of this kind: "What a good priest we lose."

At the same time, the three bells of the church began to ring, as a testimony of honor, and continued ringing, until the people were unable to see me any more. Such emotion was in my heart that I could not hold my tears nor say a word for many hours. Such was the condition in which I left the good people of Prenois.

Alas! the good seed I had sown was not to bring much fruit. A young fool, named Dellery, was appointed there and destroyed all the good I had done. He had been the assistant of the pastor of Saint Jean-de-Losne. A young girl, who was familiar with the priests, was found to be in the family way. The pastor accused the assistant and wanted him suspended. The assistant accused the pastor and sued him for slander before the tribunal of Beaune. I do not remember which of the two beat the other; but it did not do any good to my successor. He lost the confidence of his parish. The old priest Ormancey, whom I had withdrawn from his bad habits, began to drink again, and my beloved parish was again scandalized by the old priest as well as by the young one.

My entrance in my new parish was a true ovation. Never a bishop was received with more honor.

If that parish had not been spoiled by the presence of the two nuns; if I had not had, besides, a powerful enemy in the house of the bishop, my task would have been easy and my success certain.

The priests were sympathetic to me. They hated and despised the vicar-general. They believed every particular of my story concerning Aubelle. My parishioners were also all well disposed toward me, though each faction tried to pull me to its side. I put myself on my guard. I was deaf and dumb about their difficulties. In my sermons, I entreated my parishioners to live in harmony and peace, and to help me to sanctify the souls, to edify the youth and to do the most good possible. My sermons and conduct pleased. I was very popular.

But the nuns could not allow me to be esteemed and loved by both factions. They wanted to get me in their trouble, and they spared nothing to attain their end.

Seeing their rage, and being persuaded that, in spite of my efforts, they would get me into trouble; having, besides, the certitude that, if I should get into trouble, I would have neither help nor relief from the vicar-general, I wrote to the bishop that I did not want to remain in

that parish, which I had so persistently refused. I asked and asked again my removal. All favor being refused to me, and being annoyed at the publicity given to my case with the priest Aubelle, and also at the hostility of the vicar-general, I asked of the bishop an exeat to pass to another diocese. The bishop had some affection for me, because he knew that I was a good priest. He refused me that exeat for several months. Finally, on the 27th of December, 1867, His Grace sent me the following letter, the original of which I have still in my possession:

“ REVEREND DEAR SIR: (*Monsieur le cure.*)

“ Since you persist in your demand, I address you, without delay, the exeat which is necessary to you. I give it to you for any diocese, not knowing in what diocese you intend to fix your residence. I repeat it, reverend sir, it is a true grief to me to see you take that determination, and I like to think that you will not put your project to execution, or that, after having tried to settle somewhere else, you will come back to your old bishop, the true father of your soul and of your priesthood. It is for me a duty and a consolation to attest to those of my reverend colleagues from whom you will ask to be admitted in their clergy, that never your faith nor morals gave the least room to the slightest suspicion, that you are bound by no censure nor irregularity, and that we are and always shall be disposed to receive you, when you will be willing to come back to us. I close, in praying God to deter you from your project, or at least, if He allows you to accomplish it, to make you find, wherever you will go, a bishop who will take in you the same paternal interest which I will keep for you, and of which I renew here to you the sincere assurance in Christ our Lord.

† FRANCIS, Bishop of Dijon.”

I had hardly received that letter, when the difficulties which I had dreaded broke out like a clap of thunder. Though having my exeat to leave the diocese, I could not leave in the middle of difficulties, and I resolved to conquer or perish.

It was customary to regulate the accounts of the church on the first of January. As the nuns were taking care of the linen of the church, and were paid for it, they presented to the treasurer a bill, which, though the parish had been six months without a priest, was twice as high as the bill of the preceding year. The treasurer refused to pay this demand, and all the trustees, myself included, approved his action; which was also approved by all surrounding priests.

Immediately, the guns and powder of the sisters made an explosion. They ran through the village, accusing us of treating them as a couple of thieves. They wrote to their superior, requesting him to compel us to make reparation. The trustees, confident that they were right, did not judge proper to accede to their demand. It was a declaration of war. Henceforth, I was no more the pastor of the two factions of the parish, but of one only. During eight months, I had to endure the attacks of those two furies hidden under the veils of nuns. To give all the details of their diabolical opposition would not interest the public. I shall only say that, at the end of the classical year, I asked and obtained their removal.

But this was not the end of my trouble. The vicar-general, who wanted to disgrace me, had a secret understanding with the superior of the convent that he should not send us any nuns for a long while.

During six months, my parish remained without sisters. The little girls had no school and had nothing else to do but to play in the streets. I was accused of being the cause of all that evil, and a terrible opposition was manifested against me. To tell all the insults of which I was the object during that period would fill a whole volume. God knows what I had to suffer!

Seeing the ecclesiastical opposition, we went to the prefect of the Department and to the inspector of the Academy, representing to them our situation. The civil power sent to the convent instruction to provide Bourberain with sisters, within the space of eight days. In case of refusal, a lay teacher should be appointed.

For fear of losing the position, the frightened convent sent us two new sisters.

We received them with honor. The nuns came to me for confession. As they had also some knowledge of medicine, the old nuns were gradually forgotten. The parish was reconstituted on the footing of peace. The enemies became friends, except a few stubborn fellows who kept against me a sound hatred and a perpetual design of revenge. I did not mind them, and my parish flourished during nearly three years.

As the sodomitical Aubelle was still in office, and as I had the conviction that the vicar-general was a principal factor in my troubles, my contempt for him reached its climax. I wrote to the bishop that I wanted to correspond directly with His Lordship, and that I wanted to have nothing more to do with the vicar-general.

Such was my situation when the council of the Vatican opened. My bishop, to my regret, was obliged to go to Rome, and the vicar-general remained at the head of the diocese. The blunders which he made in the exercise of his functions rendered him very unpopular among priests. On the other hand, the attitude of our bishop, at the council of the Vatican, rendered the administration perfectly odious.

Our bishop was an old Gallican. He was one of the leaders of the antagonism against the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope. I do not say whether he was right or wrong. All I can say is that all the clergy of Dijon were in favor of the infallibility of the Pope, and we soon became ashamed of our bishop.

From the report of eye-witnesses, it appeared that the conduct of the bishops in Rome was far from being edifying. Several serious priests, who went to Rome on that occasion, reported that it was scandalous. It was pride, rivalry, irritation, worse than has ever been seen in the quarrels of rival collegians. The pride of a priest is great. But the pride of a bishop is still greater. Who can imagine the importance of the fight of so many prides in conflict with each other? The question was open before the world—Who should triumph?

Many bishops refused the infallibility of the Pope; some, as the bishops of France, to keep their old Gallican privileges and their independance from the Holy See; others, as the Austrian and German bishops, to abide by the independent principles of Josephism. They

preferred to be supreme teachers and rulers in their respective dioceses, rather than to be, like the remainder of the flock, the humble hearers of an infallible pope. It was noticed that the bishops the most opposed to the dogma of infallibility, were reputed to be, in their own dioceses, the most pitiless tyrants, and claimed for themselves a kind of infallibility. The French people went to the point. When they felt tired of so many useless discussions, they said in their good sense: "To satisfy the bishops and to keep peace with them, the pope would do well to grant to each of them a little bit of infallibility."

During the discussion, each party had, as their organs, a certain number of newspapers.

Mgr. Dupanloup, bishop of Orleans, in his newspaper, *Le Franc-cais*, was pouring ridicule over the Infallibilists. The illustrious catholic DeMontalembert, who had rendered so many services to the catholic cause, was deploring, on his death-bed, the infallibilist tendencies of the clergy, and denounced, before giving his last breath, what he called "the idol of the Vatican." He was called, for that reason, an apostate—a new Lamennais.

Father Hyacinth was used, as an instrument, by Mgr. Darbois, archbishop of Paris; Mgr. Dupanloup, bishop of Orleans; Cardinal Mathieu, archbishop of Besancon; Mgr. Landriot, archbishop of Reims; and Mgr. Maret, bishop *in partibus* of Surat. When father Hyacinth was condemned by Rome, those good bishops, to save their own skins, cowardly abandoned him; and it is one of the reasons why the reverend father renounced Catholicism and drowned his sorrows in the heart of a good wife.

On the other hand, the infallibilists had for their organ the giant Louis Veuillot, chief-editor of the newspaper "*L'Univers*." That man, *a forte poigne*, as he was called, was blessed by the Pope to throw mud and sarcasms to the face of the bishops, his opponents. Finally, he entreated the pope not to allow the bishops to talk so much and to cut the discussion short.

"What need have we," he exclaimed in one of his leading articles, "what need have we of hearing so long and so useless discussions? The climate of Italy is too hot. Here we are devoured by fleas. Here, while I am writing, I contemplate an enormous flea jumping over my desk. It is necessary to proclaim." The French newspapers treated very pleasantly the fleas of Louis Veuillot. They called them fleas *a poigne*, as their owner was called writer *a poigne*.

But, in spite of the mockeries of the French newspapers and of the opposition of a certain number of bishops, and in consequence of the hot season and of the fleas biting Louis Veuillot and the bishops, the discussion was cut short and the dogma of infallibility was proclaimed.

The bishops returned to their respective dioceses, the ones triumphant for their victory; the others, covered with humiliation for their defeat. Several bishops were threatened by their priests not to be received in their dioceses. My own bishop was of this number. An understanding was made among us not to receive him on his return. So, he was received, at the depot of Dijon, only by the vicar-general and a few satellites who enjoyed his favors.

Several priests, who had been in Rome during the council, reported that a certain number of bishops lead very irregular lives. It was observed that they were often absent from the council, and went to Naples and other cities of Italy, to enjoy themselves. Some showed an execrable temper. Others were found belonging to secret societies. I heard all that; being said and repeated by very serious priests, one of whom was a professor of theology in the great seminary of Dijon.

The bishops, who had opposed the dogma of infallibility, had left Rome without making their submission, and a schism was dreaded. My own bishop had not submitted either. At that time, I had the opportunity of going to Paris and of seeing Louis Veuillot, the soldier and right arm of the pope. As I related to him the way I had been persecuted by the administration on account of that miserable Aubelle, Louis Venillot, exasperated by my narration and by the attitude of my bishop in the council of Rome, exclaimed in my presence: "The rebels! the rebels! the scandalous!—they shall submit, or the excommunications of the church shall fall over their guilty heads."

Did they submit or not? I cannot say. For, a few months after, a voice more powerful than the voice of the Vatican was heard, which smothered the clamors of quarrelling bishops. The war was soon to be declared between France and Prussia, and the noise of the cannons called the attention of the world to a more serious object.

On my return from Paris, incensed by the expressions of Louis Venillot, I revealed to some priests and laymen my intention to bring my bishop and his vicar-general before an ecclesiastical tribunal, for maintaining in office, in spite of all evidence, an immoral and criminal priest whom I had denounced, and for persecuting me on that account.

Was the bishop informed of my intention? Did the vicar-general try to avert the danger by throwing me into new difficulties? I have no positive proofs to affirm it. By the facts I shall relate, the public will judge what is real in the matter.

As I have said, though I had the good will of my parish, I had yet a few bitter enemies who longed for vengeance. One of them, a Mr. Lambert, who was my neighbor, either alone or in concert with the vicar-general, played on me the following trick, in the month of May, 1870.

That Mr. Lambert had a pane of glass broken in his garret window. Everybody could see, in the glass of that window, a little hole of the size of a pea.

The next Sunday, after my evening service, the justice of the peace came to my house and told me that he wanted to search my premises. "Why?" I said in my surprise. "Because," said the judge, "you are accused of having discharged a fire-arm at the garret window of your neighbor." "When did that occur?" I inquired. "During the night," he said. I began to laugh. "Do not laugh," he continued, "the thing is serious; you are accused of no more and no less than *an attempt to murder*." On hearing that ridiculous accusation, knowing no better, I called the justice of the peace "*a fool*" and I ordered him out of my house.

The justice of the peace summoned the judge of instruction to come to my parish and make an investigation. The judge of instruction came,

indeed, and sent me, by the rural guard of the village, the following *summons* to appear before him in the town hall :

"We, judge of instruction in Dijon, order and prescribe Mr. Clerc, "pastor of the village of Bourberain, to appear before us to-day, at ten "o'clock in the morning, at the town hall of Bourberain, to be questioned on the fact of *attempt to murder*, which is imputed to him.

The judge of instruction, LOISEAU."

On reading that summons, I could not say anything else but that it was *ridiculous*. Consequently, the rural guard wrote my answer on the same summons, which I have still in my possession: "I, Nicolas Faivre, rural guard, residing in Bourberain, have notified the present summons to Mr. Clerc, at his residence, and, when talking to Mr. Clerc, "he has answered me that the denunciation is '*simply ridiculous*.'

The rural guard, FAIVRET."

My answer was brought to the judge of instruction. The judge insisted, however, that I should go and appear before him. He sent the rural guard to me again with his formal orders. I did not want to go. The rural guard, with tears in his eyes, told me—"For your own good, go. The accusation is, indeed, ridiculous; it will fall to pieces. But do not resist the authority."

I went. About three hundred men had assembled in front of the town hall to see the farce. When I passed in the middle of them, I told them jestingly: "Farewell, my friends; I think I shall be beheaded; I have killed Lambert;" and a thunder of voices vociferated the following expressions, which the judge could easily hear: "*Long life to our priest; down with the police*."

The judge of instruction asked of me if I did not keep fire-arms in my house. I answered that I had a little carbine to shoot at target with my friends in my garden. He asked for my carbine. I sent for it and he took it with him to Dijon for examination.

As he remained over one month without giving any decision or returning to me my weapon, I went to see him about it, and said to him: "Well, your honor, I think that you have had time enough to make holes in garret windows and to find out if my gun is guilty. Is it not time to return it to me?" The judge answered me that he was not yet ready. I bowed and retired.

As, at that time, I was high spirited, I went to consult a lawyer. At my request, the lawyer went to see the public officer, and, at his return, made the following declaration: "The judge has been to see the "bishop and the vicar-general about you. It appears that your superiors are against you; for, when the judge asked of them their opinion, "the bishop and the vicar-general replied, 'deliver us from that man!'"

On hearing those strange expressions, I became enraged and I exclaimed in presence of my lawyer, "Ah! it is not the judge of instruction, but the bishop who prosecutes me! Well, the bishop shall come to court with me!"

Taking leave of my lawyer, I went to my hotel, and I addressed to the judge of instruction the following letter:

"I know what is at the bottom of this infamous affair. I know "that the hands of the bishop and of the vicar-general are in it. I

"know also the reason why. They want to destroy my honor in order to save theirs. Since it is so, I denounce Mgr. Francis Victor Rivet, "bishop of Dijon, and Mr. Lebœuf, his vicar-general, as *protectors of sodomites*."

Fifteen days after, I was summoned to appear in court, in Dijon. I did not know for what kind of crime I was to be tried. I took with me about thirty of my parishioners to testify for me. My lawyer told me confidentially before the trial, "I caution you not to say a word in court. There is no use. The three judges who are going to try you are bigoted Catholics in the hands of the bishop. You will surely be condemned. If you say a disrespectful word to the court, your condemnation will be more severe. There is evidently a plot against you. But do not be afraid. We shall make an appeal to the imperial court, composed mostly of liberal judges, and I am sure they will acquit you."

I went to court with my lawyer and witnesses. The judge of instruction, probably through disgust, did not come. He sent in his place a young law student, twenty-two years old, who there made his maiden speech in my case. The charges were so absurd and so false that some of my witnesses could not help denying them loudly. Finally, an usher brought to the judges my letter, in which I accused the bishop and his vicar-general of being the "protectors of sodomites."

One of the judges, acting as if he was reading that letter for the first time, said, with a frown, "Oh, that infamous letter! that infamous letter alone deserves a condemnation!"

I was not allowed to say a word. My lawyer and witnesses were not allowed to speak. The three judges consulted each other. After they had murmured a few words, one of them turned to the public and majestically pronounced the following sentence: "Mr. Clerc is condemned to two months of imprisonment."

On hearing that verdict, my parishioners burst into tears and cursed loudly bishop and judges. "What has he done, that poor man, to be condemned to jail? What has he done? It is unjust; it is horrible; it is shameful!" such were their expressions.

While my parishioners were crying and cursing, my lawyer took me by the arm, and we went together to file an appeal to the imperial court. When this was done, without going to jail, and even without giving any bail, I rejoined my good parishioners, who could not recover from their astonishment, and we returned together to our village.

The news of my condemnation spread like wild-fire over twenty leagues around. The monstrous cause of it was also circulated. Instead of passing for a criminal deserving jail, I gained the reputation of a martyr and of a hero. The bishop was ridiculed, and I became the most popular priest in the diocese.

Though condemned to two months in jail, I continued my functions during three months, preaching, saying mass, baptizing, marrying, hearing confessions, etc., in the middle of a population which surrounded me with its esteem and love.

The chief-priest of the canton, Mr. Dard, on seeing the blunder of the bishop and its terrible consequences, went to see him in secret, and,

on his return, paid me a visit for the following purpose: "I have seen the bishop about you," said to me the worthy priest; "I told him plainly that he had made a blunder, that he was universally blamed, while you were universally praised, and that, instead of making a criminal of you, he had made of you a hero. I told him, besides, 'Mr. Clerc has made an appeal to the imperial court and he will prove his case. What a scandal! What a shame to the church!' When I had said that to the bishop, his face turned pale and he began to tremble. 'Is that so?' said his lordship. 'Yes, my lord, it is unfortunately so,' I replied. 'And you must not allow that case to appear before the imperial court. You must make an appeal to the Empress Eugenie for the pardon of Mr. Clerc. In this way, the scandal will be checked.' 'Well,' said the bishop, 'tell Mr. Clerc to make an appeal for pardon to the empress, and I will sign and recommend his petition. Tell Mr. Clerc that I assure him of his pardon.'" "To ask my pardon!" I exclaimed; "to ask my pardon from the Empress!! Never!! Only culprits demand pardon. I am not a culprit. I have made an appeal to the imperial court. I trust in its justice. If I am guilty, I am willing to suffer for my crimes."

The good priest, seeing me immovable, bade me good-bye with the utmost kindness, but also with the utmost sadness. Soon after, the war broke out between France and Prussia, and nobody thought of my case any more. After the defeat of Napoleon III, and the establishment of the republic, as the great majority of the people were incensed against priests, accusing them of being the cause of the misfortunes of France, many priests expected to have hard times and expressed their desire to be able to emigrate.

Some said to me; "You should emigrate. The bishop, being afraid that your case will appear in court, will be very glad to obtain a free pass for you. Nobody thinks of your case any more. The court has forgotten it. You will go away unnoticed. I wish I was in your place; I would soon be in America." "That is very well," I answered, "but when I come back to France, you will throw in my face that I have cheated the jail. I will not be so foolish as to do such a thing. I expect to be acquitted and will do my best to be acquitted. When I am, I shall be very glad to go to America, because I have no more respect for the bishop or for his administration."

Tired of being so long under the weight of an infamous sentence, and being afraid that, on account of the terrible condition of France, my case should be forgotten for a long time, I begged and begged again the imperial court to hurry my trial. Finally, my demand was granted.

I pleaded, myself, my case before twenty judges. I related my troubles and their cause. I maintained my accusation against the sodomite priest Aubelle, against the bishop and his vicar-general and *I was acquitted*.

The bishop and the vicar-general were ridiculed. The vicar-general, especially, became the laughing stock of all the priests of the diocese, and fell so low in their opinion, that he was obliged to resign. The justice of the peace, who had been his instrument in my troubles, was removed to an inferior position, in a distant place.

Naturally, I was triumphant. I continued during two weeks to officiate in my parish. I was the idol of my parishioners. In spite of the misfortunes of France, I desired to stay with them and sacrifice my life for them. But, in consequence of the scandal which had occurred, the bishop sent me word that he did not want me any more in his diocese; but that, if I wanted to go to America, he would give me the best testimonials and the best letters of recommendation to any bishop I would designate. I gave my consent.

Then, two letters of recommendation were given to me, one to the *Fathers of Mercy* of New York, who are French, and one of whom was my countryman; (I have not that letter, as the Fathers of Mercy kept it to themselves)—the other, to the bishop who would be willing to receive me. (This letter is authentic. It is written in Latin and provided with the special seal of the bishop. I have it still in my possession.) Here is its correct translation:

“FRANCIS VICTOR RIVET—By the Mercy of God and the Grace “of the Holy See, Bishop of Dijon, assisting to the Pontifical throne, etc.

“To our beloved in Christ, Peter Clerc, Priest of our Diocese, salutation and benediction in the Lord.

“As, for a long time, you have expressed to us your desire of leaving this our diocese to enter another one, we acquiesce in your desire “and petition. Therefore, exempting you, by these present letters, from “our jurisdiction, we submit you to the jurisdiction and power of the Ill. “and R.R. D. D., who will receive you, so that, in the future, you may “entirely depend on him.

“We, moreover, certify that, until now, you have fulfilled, in our “diocese, the sacred ministry *with zeal and piety*, and that you have been, “at all times, *conspicuous by your faith and good morals*, and that you have “been *entirely irreprehensible*, and that you are impeded by no censure “nor irregularity.

† FRANCIS, Bishop of Dijon.

Provided with those letters, I came to America in company with Mgr. Amat, late bishop of Los Angeles, who was coming back from the council of the Vatican. I revealed to him my case. The good bishop consoled me. As he was in favor of the infallibility of the pope, he blamed the course followed by my bishop in the council. He told me that there was a large field for my zeal in America. He promised me his friendship and help. In company with him, I landed in New York, on the second of November, 1870.

Depravity of the Catholic Priesthood in America.

In describing the depravity of the Catholic clergy in Europe, I have given the names of persons and places, because the cases are public. Many are even recorded in the annals of the courts.

What I have to say about the clergy of America is not quite so public. I am an eye-witness to their depravities. The pamphlet which I wrote nine years ago and which a great many people have read, gives the names of all persons and places.

I have been told that American laws do not allow any man to be so personal and that he can be prosecuted on many grounds. I do not know why. Catholics took the liberty of slandering me and of accusing me of crimes I have never committed. Why should I not be at liberty to reveal crimes which they have really committed? What I have to say is true. I take my oath before God and all mankind that I intend to say only what really exists—what I have heard and seen. I go so far as this: If I say anything that I have not heard and seen, may God afflict me with the greatest curses so long as I live, and may He plunge me for all eternity into the bottom of hell!!

Many of the facts I am to relate are known and can be ascertained by a great many persons. The difficulty is to find out if those persons will have the courage to testify publicly; or, if they will not be prevented, by Catholic influences and religious fears, from revealing what they know to be true.

In such circumstances, I am advised to be prudent and to keep myself away from the grasp of the law. In all things that are public or of minor importance, I will speak without fear. In more serious affairs, I will indicate the men by letters of the alphabet. If I am contradicted or challenged, I will give to the public the names, places and all the particulars.

My intention, in coming to America, was to solicit admission, as a professor, in a Catholic college recently founded in New York by the Fathers of Mercy, under the name of "St. Louis College." A priest of my diocese, by the name of Leneuf, was employed there as a teacher and, as I had a letter of recommendation to him from my bishop, I thought I could easily get admittance in that college.

On reaching New York, my first step was to call on Father Leneuf, at St. Louis College. Father Ronay, the principal of the college, answered my call and told me, "Father Leneuf is no longer here; he is at the house of the Fathers of Mercy. Go there; you will find him."

The truth is that, though Father Ronay and Father Leneuf were both Fathers of Mercy, they had quarrelled; and Father Ronay, being the principal of the college, had expelled Father Leneuf on account of his bad temper.

I went to the house of the Fathers of Mercy. My countryman, Father Leneuf, received me with a brotherly kiss. I drew with pride from my pocket my letters of recommendation. After having read them, the father told me smilingly: "Your letters are indeed magnificent. But I have received others which are not quite so good. Those letters represent you as a dangerous man, and we are recommended not to receive you. Never mind,"—said Father Leneuf, who had himself had trouble with the vicar-general of Dijon and despised him as much as I did myself,—“I will receive you, and I will have you admitted in the order.” He introduced me to the fathers, who received me kindly, and I took my residence in their house.

After I had told them my story, they mocked the folly of the bishop of Dijon and of his vicar-general, the stupidity of their administration, their fallibilist attitude in the council of the Vatican, etc. My accusation against the sodomitical priest Aubelle was believed grounded and approved. They treated with derision my denunciation as a murderer, and the broken glass of the garret-window. The news of the resignation of the vicar-general, which reached them immediately, confirmed them in their belief that I was in the right.

Rev. Father Lafont, superior of the Fathers of Mercy, presented my testimonials to Archbishop McClosky and obtained from His Grace in my behalf all the necessary powers to officiate in the French church of New York.

Being happy to be received, I began immediately to attend to my priestly duties—saying mass, preaching, hearing confessions, etc.

During all the time I was among the Fathers of Mercy, I found them religious, moral, sober, disinterested. I really think that religious orders are virtuous, and that Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans and even nuns, who live in communities and have made the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, are far superior in merit to the secular clergy, because the latter have too much money, too much liberty and too many occasions of committing sin. When I speak of the secular clergy, I do not mean to say that all secular priests are bad. There are good bishops. Such were Archbishop McClosky and Archbishop Alemany. There are also good priests. It is possible to be a good priest, if the ways of St. Paul are followed. But, unfortunately, the great majority of the secular priests do not follow them; and, consequently, they become bad.

If the regular clergy are not so addicted to sensuality and bodily sins as the secular clergy, they are highly contaminated by the sins of the mind.

Once, the illustrious Bossuet, while preaching to a congregation of nuns, addressed them this sweet compliment: "My dear sisters, you are pure, you are pure like angels!—but you are proud, you are proud like devils!"

This may be addressed to any congregation of monks, whose internal and external contentions are a mystery to nobody.

When I was in Dijon, my bishop fought against the introduction of Jesuits and Dominicans in his diocese. They came in spite of him and they never agreed.

Who did not hear about the long and hard struggle which existed between the Sulpitians and the bishop of Montreal?

When I was in New York, there was a perpetual rivalry among the religious orders. The Fathers of Mercy did not like the Jesuits and reciprocally. The Capuchins did not like the Redemptorists and reciprocally. The Dominicans did not like the Paulists and reciprocally. And all those orders were hated by secular priests, because they were making collections, on the sly, in their respective parishes and taking their money away from them.

Since I came to San Francisco, I have been told that the Jesuits are not on very good terms with the archbishop and the secular clergy. They are considered as the soldiers of the Pope and depending on him more than on the bishop. They are considered as cunning spies who have great talent in raising money and in constituting themselves above the level of the secular priesthood. They are accused of *duplicity and deceit*, to such an extent that the word *Jesuit* is thrown, as an insult, in the face of every deceitful man. I must say that, in my opinion, the Jesuits have not stolen their reputation. They richly deserve it.

I have not lived among them, and do not know whether or not the monks have little fights among themselves; but I have lived with the Fathers of Mercy of New York, and here are the struggles among them that have met my observation:

A young priest, who belonged the diocese of Santa Fe, and who had left his diocese for some unknown motive, had received employment in the house of the fathers. It came to my notice that he was in conflict with Father Leneuf. I saw them often quarrelling in the dining-room. Once, the young priest became so excited, that, swearing like a porter, he took a revolver in his hand and threatened to shoot Father Leneuf; but the latter got the best of him and had him expelled from the house.

Though being delivered of a powerful enemy, Father Leneuf had another no less formidable to fight in the very society of the fathers. That enemy was Father Ronay, who had expelled him from his college.

The two monks were anathematizing each other, even before the lay people. Father Ronay accused Father Leneuf of bad temper, insubordination, stubbornness, and his want of domination. He was repeating here and there that Mr. Leneuf had been interdicted in Dijon, expelled from the convent of the Sisters of Gevrey-Chambertain, and received in the order of Mercy, only through mercy. Father Leneuf, favored by Father Lafont, who had a personal grudge against Father Ronay, accused him of being a sensual man, without faith and piety. He reproached him for perpetually kissing the little boys, for holding them indecently on his person, for having in his college neither crucifix nor holy water, for giving all his attention to good meals, and for charging fabulous prices. His conclusion was this: "The college of Father Ronay is no longer the institution of the Fathers of Mercy; it is a private enterprise, and he is no more than a *merchant of soup*." He went so far as to write against him, to their superior in Paris, a denunciation of ten pages, which he read to me, and in which he demanded his expulsion from the order. In the meantime, I made acquaintance with Father Ronay. That priest appeared to me to be a real gentleman, an amiable and good-hearted priest. His manners pleased me,

and I found that he was right against Father Leneuf. I suppose that my manners did not displease him either, for he proposed that I should go and teach in his college. He offered me a good salary, with room and board. I was really tempted. I had only one objection: I was afraid of losing the friendship of Father Leneuf, if I should accept the place. Resembling a vicious dog who despises a fat bone, but does not allow any other dog to touch it, he was despising the college of Father Ronay, but did not want any other priest employed in it as a teacher.

I asked the advice of several priests and lay people. Everyone told me, "Go to Father Ronay." So, I resolved to go.

When I made my determination known, all the fathers became greatly excited. "It is a disgrace to our order," they exclaimed. "We establish a house of the Fathers of Mercy, and Father Ronay takes secular priests! He sends away our members, withdraws from us our novices and shows to the people the spectacle of our discord! It is a shame!"

Each father came in his turn to deter me from my determination. The holy Father Aubry, in particular, said to me, "For the good of your soul, remain in a religious order. The secular priests of America have too much money and too much liberty. Many lose their souls."

Father Leneuf employed all the resources of his wicked passions to dissuade me.

I asked again the advice of priests and of lay people. The unanimous voice was again: "Go to Father Ronay; do not be afraid."

Finally, after a conversation in which Father Leneuf showed me all his despicable temper, I told him, "My dear sir, with such a temper as you show me, I do not think I can get along with you in this house. I think I shall agree better with Father Ronay. So, I will go to Father Ronay."

He threatened me with the most terrible threats—that he would have me expelled from the order and prevent me from obtaining any position in America. I let him talk and swear, and I went quietly to live with Father Ronay.

From that time Father Leneuf became my most mortal enemy. He never addressed me a word. He avoided my presence, and spoke unfavorably of me in different places. I did not pay attention to him, and I tried to fulfill my new duties in the best way I could.

A priest of New York, whom I will designate under the name of "Father A.," having lost his assistant, I was deputed to sing mass and vespers in his church every Sunday. For my services, I received, each time, the sum of five dollars.

At the approach of the Lenten season, Father Ronay, who was a remarkable preacher, engaged to go to a parish of New Orleans to preach the Lenten station. During his absence, I was to fulfill the functions of principal of the college.

Great scandal among the Fathers of Mercy! To put a secular priest at the head of one of their colleges was for them an outrage. All possible means were employed to induce Father Ronay to put Father Leneuf at the head of his college, at least during his absence. Unable to resist the demands made upon him, he placed Father Leneuf at the head of his college.

Being afraid of the bad temper and of the ideas of revenge of my countryman, I said to Father Ronay: "What a hard time I am going to have with Father Leneuf! Can you not bring about a reconciliation between us?" He promised to do so. He invited him to take dinner with me and all the teachers. Though I was placed, at table, on the right side of Father Leneuf, he did not address me a word. The good Father of Mercy did not show me any mercy.

Father Ronay was much embarrassed. He advised me to go during his absence, to live and take my meals in the house of Father A. in whose church I was singing mass every Sunday. I told him that I should not like to live with that priest, whose manners displeased me. Father Ronay did not insist.

Meanwhile I fell sick and was about eight days in my bed. As Father Ronay had good feelings for me, he came frequently to see me in my room; and, when he departed to New Orleans, he came to bid me farewell, kissing me repeatedly and shedding abundant tears. I was also crying.

During my sickness, Father Leneuf did not pay me a single visit. When I was restored to health, I went to teach again, but I found out that Father Leneuf had appointed another teacher in my place. The good father told me: "Father A. wants to have you for his assistant; go to his house." For fear I should refuse to go, while I was absent from the college, he packed my trunks, hired a carriage at his own expense, and had all my property transferred to the house of Father A.

The measure looked violent and was universally condemned by the clergy and the people of New York. It gave me the sympathy of many priests.

For obvious reasons, I was not very much pleased with my new position. Father A. was a very queer, proud, domineering and brutal man. He was the type of a perfect tyrant. He did not like to receive regular assistants from the archbishop. He wanted priests depending only on himself and whom he could treat as mere domestics. In fact, no priest regularly belonging to the diocese wanted to go to his service. He was generally despised and even dreaded.

Before I went to him, he had consecutively had in his house five priests, coming from different parts of the world. All of them had been the object of his ill-treatments and had left him in the middle of quarrels and curses. The last one, though being reputed to be a pious man, had disappeared without anybody knowing what had become of him. His cassocks, his money, his letters, had remained in the house of the pastor; but the priest was seen no longer. Father A. seemed to be indifferent about his fate. As I asked him once what had become of that priest, he answered me quietly: "He was crazy; I suppose he has drowned himself." I made no further inquiry. I was his successor—his unfortunate successor.

I was in the house of the priest, like a poor servant, receiving now and then humiliations, rebukes and ill-treatments. Everything disagreeable in the sacred ministry was for me. My duties were to attend to the sick, especially the poor. Every case of typhoid fever, small-pox, cholera-morbus and other contagious diseases was for me. To do some-

thing agreeable in the church, to preach, to marry, to baptize, to receive the money, was his own reservation. For the confessions, he had his chosen people. For the bulk of the poor Irish people he had nothing but disdain, and I was obliged to hear alone and to carry the whole burden of their sins. Sometimes, some old Irish women would make their confessions in the Irish language. I told them: "I cannot understand you; go to the old man." But the old man returned them to me without pity. When I told him that I could understand better those talking good English, he answered: "There is no necessity for you to understand what is told you. Let them talk. Do not say much. Pronounce your '*Ego te absolvo.*' That's all."

How many confessions I did not understand! How many times my mind was upset by the multitude, especially on Saturdays, being obliged to hear from two to three hundred people whom I could hardly understand, while the old pastor was drinking, smoking or enjoying himself in his house! How many times I said: "What kind of a job am I doing here? Is this business serious? Are not the sacraments profaned? Would not those poor people do as well to confess to the walls or to the pews of the church?"

I had come to America on the second of November, without knowing a word of English. I heard the confessions during the Lenten season, which occurred in the months of February and March. Assuredly, my hearing was not drilled enough to the English sounds, and it was utterly impossible for me to understand confessions in English. Yet, I was obliged to hear them.

As Father A. was disdained by the Irish priests of the city, I was not allowed to go and see them. Yet I ventured to go in secret and see some of them. Those priests told me that Father A. was a bad man, that he had done harm to all his assistants, and that he would also injure me. They advised me to leave his house. I wrote to several American bishops, soliciting admission in their dioceses. They all answered me that they had no vacant positions for French priests. Consequently, I resolved to keep my situation, and my miserable lot was to contemplate, during two years, a series of disorders, the principal of which I will now relate:

I was not long in acquiring the certainty that Father A. was a bad priest, in every respect. I realized by degrees (1) that he had neither faith nor piety; (2) that he was a simoniac and a thief; (3) that he was a drunkard; (4) that he was immoral.

1.—*He had neither faith nor piety.* He had no regard for the discipline of the church. He had no respect for the Eucharist, which he was carrying in his pocket to the sick while talking and smoking, leaving it sometimes on the table of the dining-room or on the mantel-piece or among rags in the drawers of the vestry. After two months of residence at his house, I wanted to renew the Host of the Ostensorium. I swallowed it. I found it so musty and so bitter, that I was afraid of being poisoned. As I asked him why he did not renew his altar-bread, he answered me, "*I do not mind those details.*" I surprised him once taking a cup of coffee with a cracker before his mass. Once, as the good Irish women brought to him their scapulars to be blessed, and as he

was in a hurry to go out, he said, in my presence: "*With their rags, they bother me.*" I never saw him say a prayer in his house. In fact, he had no breviary at home; his breviary was at church. Like the Pharisees, he was praying in public to be seen by men, while transacting business; and many times I saw him reciting, in one month, prayers which should have been said in another month, or holding his breviary upside down.

2.—*He was a simoniac and a thief.* It is an article of the Catholic doctrine that a priest ought not to realize any profit or gain on the masses ordered by the public. In America, the general custom is that for a low mass is paid one dollar, and for a high mass, five. If somebody has the generosity to give more, the full amount belongs to the priest who says the mass. If a priest gives to a colleague a mass he cannot say, and retains a part of the amount given, he is reputed to be a simoniac and is liable to the censures of the church.

But I have the names and addresses of Catholics who ordered masses of Father A. and paid him two dollars for each mass. I said those masses in his place, but I never received more than one dollar. I sang for him a great many high masses for each of which he was receiving five dollars, and I never received more than one dollar and a half for each of them.

Once, an old Irish lady, to whom I had rendered service, trusted five dollars to Father A., with the request to give them to me. Three months after, I met her and she asked me if I had received her money. I answered that I knew nothing about it. Being a little excited, I said to the priest, "Why do you keep my money for yourself? What kind of conscience have you?" He answered that he had forgotten it. He was saying the same thing to all his creditors.

Once, he took up in his church, a collection for his own country which he represented as being in distress. The collection amounted to the sum of three hundred dollars. A young girl, who came a little after from his own village, used before me and o her persons the following language: "Father A. is very generous to his family and friends. He has sent lately three hundred dollars to be distributed among the members of his family, to my own mother, to the mother of his former cook and to his old teacher." Did his congregation intend to give its money for the benefit of the family and friends of the priest? If the congregation did not intend to do so, was it not a theft?

Father A. was reputed to be worth about fifty thousand dollars. He told me once that he did not need the support of his parish and that he could live within his income. When he came from Europe, he was poor as Job. This is a proof that, during his sacred ministry in America, he was careful to gain, if not the souls of Christians, at least their money.

3.—*He was a drunkard.* Once, a female teacher of his school told me that she found him drunk in the vestry of the church, and, that, from that time, she had lost all confidence in him.

Many times, when he was coming home at night, I saw him staggering in the yard, being hardly able to talk and to stand on his feet.

Sometimes, after his orgies, he was so drunk that, when people called on him for business, it was impossible to awake him.

One Saturday evening, as the church was filled with penitents anxious to make their confessions for the Sunday communion, he remained in his room until nine o'clock at night. As the penitents were impatient, I sent several times for him. At last, he got up. According to the testimony of his cook and four boys who were in his house, when he came to the dining-room, he fell full length on the floor. He came, as well as he could, to the vestry of the church, and put himself in a position to hear the confessions. But he fell asleep again. A good Irishman, who went to him for confession, after having waited twenty minutes to hear a word from him, left him and came to me for confession. "I come from Father A.," he said, "I have been twenty minutes at his feet, and he did not address me a word. I think he is asleep or drunk." After having heard that, for fear of scandal, I went to Father A., who was still asleep. I awoke him and told him: "For pity's sake, go home and do not give any scandal." He went, and I was obliged to hear alone the confessions of the crowd until after midnight.

Father A. was not alone in his sprees. He had some companions. Some priests of his type were coming from time to time to his house and, after copious libations, were reclining on sofas or armchairs or talking nonsense to the servant girl of the house.

Once, he came very late at night in company with an Irish priest, who was the pastor of a large parish in the neighborhood. I designate him under the name of Father B. The two pastors remained in the dining-room until three o'clock in the morning. They made such a noise as to awake all the inmates. Whether they were drinking or not I cannot say, because I was in my bed. At seven o'clock, Father A. said his mass, as customary. But Father B. remained in bed until 11 o'clock and said no mass. I do not think either that he said his breviary. He was awakened for the dinner, which took place at 12 o'clock. I shared their good dinner and did honor, like themselves, to the claret, Rhine wine and champagne. At 4 o'clock, Father B. said: "It is time for me to go home. I must take the train." He told me: "Father Clerc, come with me to the depot, and help me to carry my valise." I gave my consent. When we were at the corner of a certain street, he told me: "Oh! here dwells an Irish widow to whom I must pay a visit. Let us go and see her." We went. Mrs. C. received us cordially. A hot punch was offered, after which Father B. asked for another, and then for another, until he became drunk and finally asked of Mrs. C. the favor of giving her a little kiss. I told him that he was not respectable and he called me a humbug. I was so indignant that I wanted to leave the house, when Mrs. C. tried to appease me and invited me to take tea with him. It was nine o'clock. I accepted, not without repugnance.

During tea, the priest, who was out of his mind, began again to insult me. This time, I became mad, and I told him: "Dirty drunkard, if you do not respect yourself, respect at least your company." In my disgust, I took my hat and went away. The next day, early in the morning, he sent for me for the purpose of making an apology. I refused to go. In the afternoon, after he had left Mrs. C., I went to see her and asked her: "At what o'clock did Father B. go to bed last night?"—"About one o'clock," she answered. "Did you see him say his breviary?" I asked.

"He did not say any prayer," she replied, "he was too drunk." "That is awful," said I; "such are the dignitaries of the church. That priest deserves to be suspended." "Keep silent," said she, "If you talk, you can only hurt yourself." So, I remained silent.

Once, a bishop, whom I will designate under the name of Mgr. O., and who belonged to a religious order which had a monastery in New York, came to pass a few months in that monastery. Mgr. O. had been bishop in Italy. He was related to the royal family of Naples and had been expelled from his diocese, when Victor Emmanuel annexed the kingdom of Naples to the kingdom of Italy. The Holy Father had appointed him bishop of some diocese in Asia. But as Mgr. O. was not pleased in Eastern countries, he asked permission to come to America, and was appointed bishop of a town in the United States. There, he did not agree with his priests. He complained that his priests were of the worst kind, and often ex-claimed: "I wish I was dead!"

The bishop was living in the monastery of New York, when Father A. invited him for dinner at his house. For Father A. it was a great honor to dine a bishop; and, as he missed no opportunity of making known what could glorify him, all the echoes of the neighborhood resounded with the name of Mgr. O.

While Father A. was preparing the tables and filling the bottles, he sent me to the monastery with a carriage and two beautiful horses. I had the order to transport his lordship through the principal parts of the city and the Central Park, and to make him enjoy as much as I could. I filled my pockets with the best Havana cigars, and then took the bishop with me, according to order. The bishop was very easy to talk with. He talked French. We talked French. We smoked, we laughed, we sang. Never before had I been so honored and so delighted. After our little trip, we came for the dinner, which, naturally, was worthy of a bishop. After dinner, every one had his little song. I had mine. The bishop had his. I remarked nothing improper.

Soon, the carriage and the two beautiful horses re-appeared at the door. The bishop, Father A. and the friars went in. I do not know where they went. But, they came back at 9 o'clock P. M. As I did not know that the bishop had come back, I went to the dining room, and I found all of them drinking again and in excellent mood. What particularly struck my attention was the face of the bishop, which was as red as a poppy; his eyes, which shone like two stars; and his legs, which were staggering. The poor bishop was drunk.

"What a pity!" I said to myself; "What a pity! The first time I see a bishop in his private life, such a spectacle is offered to me!"

I went to my room without saying a word. I revealed the fact to Mrs. C. and to a Dominican father to whom I was going for confession.

A little after, Mgr. O. resigned his bishopric and went to board with the Archbishop of Quebec, Canada. For the past two or three years, he has been sent by the Pope to settle the difficulties of a Catholic country. He must be a *clear-headed* pacifier. Though I do not give the name of that bishop, I think that all those who read the newspapers can guess it.

Father A. had a special friend in a priest who had something to do with the administration of the diocese and was initiated into its secrets.

That priest, whom I will designate under the name of Father D., often came at night to chat with him. As Father A. had always ready for him a bottle of claret and champagne, that priest was a constant visitor.

It is written that "truth is in the wine," and that drunkards cannot keep a secret. As I was sometimes invited to take a glass with them, I had the good luck to penetrate into the secrets of the diocese, and especially into the following one:

A certain bishop, whom I shall designate as Mgr. E., was a scandalous drunkard. His drunkenness was a public fact. All the dignitaries and officers of the State knew it.

The bishops of America had tried to have him interdicted by the Pope, and had sent to Rome a denunciation against him. The Pope had considered the matter for a long time. As Mgr. E. was a talented man, His Holiness was afraid of the consequences of the interdict.

The question was then raised to divide his diocese in two, and to create a new bishop for the new diocese. Mgr. E. gave his consent, on the condition that his vicar-general, who was an ex-protestant dean convert, should be created bishop of the new diocese. The bishops of the province did not like the ex-protestant dean, and found him incapable. They offered to the approbation of the Pope a good Irish priest, who was the secretary of a certain bishop.

The poor holy father, Pio IX, being so far from America, was afraid of making a fallible step. He considered the matter very long. At last, in his wisdom and infallibility, he took the following determination:

To induce Mgr. E. not to drink any more, he created the ex-protestant dean bishop of the new diocese; and, to watch Mgr. E. and prevent him from drinking, he gave him as a coadjutor the secretary of the bishop already mentioned. The new bishop I will designate under the name of Mgr. F., and the coadjutor, under the name of Mgr. G.

This arrangement seemed, at first, to be a test of the infallibility of the pope. But the events demonstrated that the pope was not infallible. For, Mgr. E. continued to drink more than ever, and many priests said that his drunkenness had degenerated into craziness.

Mgr. E. was far from being satisfied with the arrangement of the Holy Father. He did not want a coadjutor, and he thought that, if he was able alone to empty six bottles of claret a day, he was able alone to govern his diocese. So, in the beginning, Mgr. E. positively refused the services of his coadjutor, and afterwards he grossly abused him. Once, I saw that poor coadjutor crying bitterly in the house of a priest, and deploring his position. He told me with the accents of the deepest sorrow: "Father Clerc, you complain a great deal of being the assistant of Father A. I would be glad to exchange my position for yours. I would prefer to be the assistant priest of Father A., than to be the coadjutor of Mgr. E."

4.—*Father A. was an immoral priest.* A man who leads such a disorderly life, must naturally be immoral. A few facts will prove that he was so.

Before I was in his house, there was a great deal of talk about his relations with a female teacher of his school, whom I will designate

under the name of Miss J. It was said by the neighbors, that the female cook of the pastor had become jealous of her, had spat on her face, called her a prostitute, and forbidden her to come any more to the parsonage. The niece of the pastor, who was living with him, had used the same language and had told her *that she was ruining her uncle*. In fact, while I was there, the niece and the teacher were still mortal enemies. That female teacher having been publicly called, by another teacher, *the mistress of Father A.*, a law-suit followed, in which the pastor went to plead for his favorite. The trial was interesting. The population laughed at the pastor, and the *Daily News* of New York gave a very pleasant account of the affair.

During my sojourn in the house of Father A., Miss J. came very seldom to the parsonage; but she met him somewhere else. As I was called at night to visit sick persons, and obliged to go to church for the viatic and the holy oils, I surprised them twice in the vestry of the church, once at eleven o'clock, and once after midnight. Many people had seen them going in and out of the vestry at late hours at night, and were making fun of it. Why, indeed, was that girl so late in the vestry-room of the church, and, particularly, at the same time as the pastor?

The young female cook of the pastor was to be married. In prevision of that event, the pastor had ordered another young one from his own village, in Europe.

After long expectation, the new cook came. She was a young lady about eighteen years old, good looking, with rosy cheeks, lively eyes, lively conversation, so that she boasted she would please every priest, and be loved by every one of them.

In the beginning, when nothing existed between her and the pastor, she spoke very unkindly of him. She told me once, that in her village, he was reputed to be very fond of ladies, and that he had been obliged to come to America for that very reason. Once, being angry with him, because he slapped her on the face, she said: "The old pig comes every night to see me, when I am in my bed. He awakes me every night."

At that time, not feeling well, my physician advised a change of air and a trip to Canada. I was four weeks absent.

As I was disgusted with the prostitution house of Father A., I called, during my trip, on four bishops, the bishops of Toronto, Montreal, Quebec and Providence, soliciting the favor of being admitted in their dioceses. The only favorable answer I received was from the bishop of Quebec, and yet I was to wait for some time.

When I came back from my trip, I found quite a change in the house of Father A. The cook, formerly so indifferent to the pastor, was very attentive to him. That girl, formerly so fresh and so good looking, had become thin and tired in her face. On account of my late sickness, the pastor seemed to have great concern for my health; but, in reality, he could not bear me in the house, when he was there himself. So, oftentimes, he would say to me: "It is good for your health to go out and to take the fresh air." Being astonished that he had such an interest in my health, I tried one day to find out what might be his motive.

On November 13th, 1872, after I had said my mass, the pastor sent me, as customary, *to take the fresh air*. It was nine o'clock, a. m. I told him: "Well Father, this time I will go very far. I will not come back before noon."

But, about about half an hour later, I came back without noise and without being seen. I looked in the kitchen—no cook. I went with precaution up stairs—complete silence. I knocked at the door of the pastor—no answer.

I went to my room, which was contiguous to that of the pastor, and there I waited in silence for over one hour, my door being open. No noise was made. They probably expected that I would go out again, and that they could separate without being seen. At last, they lost patience. Thinking that, probably, my door was shut, the pastor opened his door, and the girl rushed like lightning down the steps.

I went immediately down stairs and asked her why she was running so fast. At first, she did not answer; but, afterwards, turning to me a face rain-bow color, she said: "I was late for my dinner, I was in a hurry."

Afterwards, I went up stairs to the pastor's room under the pretext of borrowing a book from him. I told him: "I knocked at your door; why did you not answer me?" He said: "I was regulating some kitchen accounts with the cook." "All right," said I, and the pastor, with a rain-bow colored face, handed the book in question to me.

Though I played the innocent, they did not doubt from that time that I suspected them. I was no more sent to take the fresh air. But they had another resource. They knew that my sleep was very sound, and they imagined they could securely have their meetings from four to five in the morning. So, on January 4th, 1873, at four o'clock in the morning, when, against my custom, I was perfectly awake, I heard the steps of the stairs creaking very slightly as under the pressure of very light steps. My curiosity was naturally aroused. I got up. I opened my door without noise. I looked. The door of the room of the pastor was wide open and the gas was burning. I shut my door again, but not entirely, and I waited, in the dark, until I should see the person whose steps I had heard. At five o'clock, the pastor, according to his custom, came out of his room and went to the bath-room to make his toilet. Of course, he was not afraid of making a noise. It was quite the contrary. Protected by that noise, the girl, whom I saw with my two eyes, came quietly out of his room and went down stairs.

I said nothing. But I revealed the fact the next day to a father Dominican, and to the widow, Mrs. C. I told them that I intended to denounce to the archbishop that scandalous priest. But they advised me to keep still, because the archbishop was already aware of many facts, but did not dare to touch Father A., on account of the gang of priests he belonged to, and of the scandal which would follow. So I kept silent. In some way or another, Father A. and his cook were aware that I knew of their commerce. Consequently, they could not bear me any more. My meals became irregular and of inferior quality. When I complained to the girl of being neglected, she became haughty and insulting. At last she told me: "I am able to kick you out of the

house, and I will kick you." To such strange language I answered: *"Is this the language of a servant girl? Are you the mistress of the house? Yes, I think that you are a mistress."*

That word mistress produced a wonderful effect. The girl repeated it to her master and to all the neighbors. She accused me of having called her "a prostitute and the mistress of the pastor."

I did not deny it. I repeated the word to an Irish pastor of the neighborhood, who laughed at it and said that I did not say too much. That priest, who knew perfectly well the ways of Father A., told me: "Now it is all over with Father A. and you. Go quickly to the archbishop; because Father A., to protect himself, will go and plot something against you."

I went immediately to the archbishop. His Grace had already received the visit of Father A., and, in consequence of that visit, he addressed me the kind words which follow:

"Father Clerc, I am very sorry. But your pastor does not want you any more. I cannot help it. You know that you do not belong to my diocese. You were only for the use of Father A. As I have no French parish in my diocese to give to you, you must ask of another bishop to receive you in his diocese. All that I can do is to give to you my recommendation."

I answered the archbishop: "Reverend Sir, I am thankful for your kindness. You have been, indeed, very good to me. I am willing to go, under your recommendation, to any diocese; but before going, I should be glad to prove to you, by $a + b$, that Father A. is a bad priest, a man without religion and piety, a simoniac and thief, a drunkard, an immoral man of the worst kind, a real monster."

The archbishop, who probably knew everything about it, answered that he had no time to hear me. I prayed him respectfully to speak of me to his colleagues. He promised me to do so. Then I took leave of him.

A good Irish priest, who loved me as much as he despised my pastor, offered me the hospitality of his house. As he was sickly, I helped him in his functions. There I remained until the death of Rev. Stars, vicar-general of New York.

Mgr. F., the ex-protestant dean, who had been recently created bishop of a new diocese, having come to the funeral, I was called to the archbishop and presented by him to the new bishop, who accepted me immediately for his diocese.

Ten days after, I received my appointment to a Canadian parish, in a large city, in the north of the State of New York.

When I went to take possession of my parish, I found my predecessor, whom I will designate under the name of Father K., unwilling to leave the place. He had recently bought in the town, a nice little house for the sum of two thousand dollars, and was comfortably established in it, in company with two young so-called nieces. He owned, besides, in the city, a grocery store which he had put into the hands of his nephew, and in which he was selling the hams, cabbages and potatoes which were given to him, as a present, by ignorant Irishmen. As he was always begging and singing misery among them, he made a big

profit out of their credulity, and his parish was for him a little bonanza, while the new parish, offered to him by the bishop, was situated on a mountain, in the vicinity of Lake Champlain, and did not present so many resources.

At my first visit to Father K., he confessed to me that he had not given his resignation, that the bishop had no right to remove him without his consent, and that he would sue him before an ecclesiastical tribunal. He then began to curse him, calling him a stupid man, a fool, a protestant dean, a man of money, entirely unworthy of being a bishop. In his language, the bishop had neither intelligence or education. He was despised by the other bishops and by the priests. There were hundreds of priests who deserved a bishopric better than he. He was the creature of the drunken bishop, Mgr. E., and had no influence at all.

At the same time, he accused the Irish priest of the place. He called him a hypocrite, a traitor, who, while pretending to be his friend, had plotted his removal, because he was receiving masses from the Irish.

As Father K. did not appear any more in church, even on Sundays, a great many people were afraid that he would turn a Protestant.

Though having no more power in the place, he continued to make christenings and to marry in private residences, being paid for it. He was collecting all the pew rents and what was due to the church, and appropriating it to himself. He was spreading against me the most mischievous insinuations: "I was a Frenchman, not a Canadian. I would not understand Canadian manners. Canadians should have a Canadian priest. All priests coming from France were coming from bad motives," etc.

Many Canadians, being influenced by these rumors, were unwilling to receive me. On my first appearance in the church, I was obliged to correct those rumors. The manner I officiated and preached captured the population, so that, after the office, the people, who had never heard a good sermon, exclaimed. "Thank God! We have a priest who knows how to read! The other could not read."

They then began to mock his stupidity, his mercantile dispositions, his covetousness and even his morals. Father K. had been already four months on my shoulders, without having rendered any account of his administration. He had kept in his hands the registers of the church under the pretext that he wanted to collect his own dues. Finally the parish, and especially the trustees, began to distrust him. We summoned him to render his accounts. We had a meeting in which it was found out that Father K. had appropriated to himself a sum of thirty-two dollars, which was not due to him. He acknowledged the fact and signed to us a bill for that amount. But, afterwards, he refused to pay it.

After the settlement of his accounts, seeing that there was no more hope for him in that place, he resolved, though reluctantly, to go to his poor parish, on the banks of Lake Champlain. But, in going away, he swore that he would come again and take possession of his parish. He left, against me, a good lieutenant, and that lieutenant was his good nephew, the grocer, who spared nothing to put sticks in my wheels and

tried to set my parishioners against me. I have all the details of his machinations; but I think they would not interest the public.

In the month of July, in order to make acquaintance with the priests of the diocese, and to repair the losses of my soul, I went to the city of my bishop, for what is called a pastoral retreat.

Does the public know what a *pastoral retreat* is? In the mind of the Catholic church, it is a kind of revival for the sanctification of priests. They are reputed to go there to reflect on their priestly obligations, to give up themselves, during five or six days, to mortification and prayer, to acknowledge and confess their sins, and to take resolutions to live, in the future, as good priests. It is what priests say to their people, and what is generally believed. But this is the reality:

When priests go to the city of the bishop for a retreat, they are directed to the convent of the sisters. Those good nuns, whose tender hearts were never defiled, and who are full of delicate attentions for the ministers of the Lord, lie there in wait for them. Though the allurements are great, the priests do not hurry to confine themselves. They go to the best hotels; they ask for private rooms and for the best liquors and cigars. Before confessing their sins, they must commit a few more. Before entering the cloister, they must fill their satchels. To compel the Holy Spirit to come to their souls, they must fill their pockets and satchels with bottles of whiskey. When the provisions are made, they go to the house of repentance.

At first, they go to kneel before the bishop and to kiss his ring. Afterwards, a visit of politeness is rendered to the dear sisters. Those poor creatures, who have abandoned the joys of the world to consecrate themselves to the Lord and to the service of priests, are justly gratified with some compliments and some holy smiles. Then, as it is repeated during the whole retreat, a good repast, prepared by their delicate hands, is graciously tendered by them. A recreation follows, where priests are skillfully choosing their particular friends and avoiding their enemies. For, it must be known that many priests are enemies to each other, and keep their mutual hatred even during the days of reconciliation. Three or four times a day, the bell of the convent calls them to the chapel. A father Jesuit, unknown to the priests and very well paid for, reads, in a manuscript written by himself, a few reflections on the sacrifices of the ancient law and on the duties of priests. A recreation follows, during which, priests either take a walk in the yard, or go to their satchels to drink and smoke. The conversation of all does not run on the sermon of the Jesuit, but on their respective parishes, on their incomes, on the difficulties of their fellow-priests, on the probable vacancies, and on the possibility of obtaining this or that coveted parish. Such is the occupation of the day.

At nine o'clock, at night, the bell calls the priests to the *Dormitory*. The word *dormitory*, (from the Latin *dormire*, to sleep), means a place for rest and sleep. It is so generally, but it is not so during a pastoral retreat. During the five days I have been there, I have been unable to shut my eyes. It was a noise, a dissipation, a disorder which I have never witnessed, even among the boys of the college. The priests talk, smoke, drink and play all the night. They open and shut the doors.

They run from room to room. I suppose that they visit only the brothers, and that the innocent sisters are left to their solitude. They come back; they throw water on the beds of those who try to sleep; they overthrow beds; they laugh and loudly manifest their satisfaction and enjoyment.

Once, I was trying to sleep, when a big priest, whom I will designate under the name of Father P., weighing about three hundred pounds, came, undressed, to my bed, and placed his form upon my face. I exclaimed: "You are mistaken, this is not your bed." He went away. After a while, he came back and renewed the same ceremony, trying to introduce his mass in my bed. I cried loudly: "Are you crazy? Once more, this is not your bed." The priests were roaring. At last, the good priest took another direction and tried to find his bed. But, through mistake, he introduced himself into the bed of another priest, who threw him so heavily on the floor, that the noise awoke the whole house, even the sisters and the bishop. The priest was beastly drunk. He had lost his bed; he was in search of it, but could not find it.

The next day, all the priests were laughing at me, and asking me if I had well considered the face of Father P. It was the theme of the conversation during the remainder of the retreat, and, I think, the only souvenir which remained from it.

At the end of the retreat, when the time came for the priests to go to confession, the bishop appointed five of the most respectable to hear the confession of others. Among them was Father P., who had given so good an example on the previous night. On hearing his name, everybody began to laugh. The bishop asked the reason of that laughter. When he knew it, he withdrew the name of Father P. from the list of confessors.

In the Catholic doctrine, the confession must be followed by the satisfaction, and every priest must satisfy like the remainder of the flock. To fulfill this part of the sacrament, we were all called by turn to see the bishop, who did not ask of us if the retreat had benefited our souls, but, taking a register, said to each of us:

"For your board of five days, you owe twenty dollars.

"You owe so much for your cathedra-ticum. (That is to say, for the support of the bishop.)

"You owe so much for dispensations.

"You must give something for the Pope.

"You must give something for the provincial seminary.

"You must give something to buy a house for me.

"I must give two hundred dollars to the Father Jesuit for his trouble, and repay our dear sisters who have accommodated us with their house, and taken so good care of us."

The priests, amazed, looked for their pocket-books. A part of the contents had evaporated in smoke and whiskey. The railroads had taken another part. There was just enough remaining to pay the bill of fare of the bishop and to get them home. The priests found the pill a little bitter and the satisfaction hard. Many said: "It is the last retreat I come to. What an extortion! Twenty dollars for five days of board! and two hundred dollars for that silly Jesuit who has bothered

us with his stupidities! It is too much! It is too much!" and the good priests returned to their homes, not edified at all, and *with the firm resolution of not behaving better.*

Such is an ecclesiastical retreat, as demonstrated to me, in the year of grace 1873.

A retreat of that kind was not to produce good fruits, and we shall see its results.

An Irish priest of the diocese, whom I will designate under the name of Father M., had a mixed parish, composed mainly of Irish and French-Canadians. As his parishioners seemed to forget their religious duties, he resolved to give to them a kind of revival. He invited two Irish priests to attend to the Irish population, and he invited me to attend to the French-Canadians. I answered his call. In the house of God, everything was all right. Beautiful sermons were made, both in French and English, and people seemed to be anxious to return to their God. But, in the house of the priest, the spectacle was very different. To tell the truth, I must say that the two Irish priests, invited with me, did not do anything out of the way. But, for *Father M.*, O God! what a degradation! During the five days I was there, he was in a complete state of drunkenness. He had at his service a good-looking young girl, about twenty years old, who, during the revival, had given the hospitality, in the house of the pastor, to a nice young Irish lady belonging to another village. During the day, when the pastor could stand on his feet, he was running after the girls, kissing them, throwing them on the floor and struggling there with them. After that foolish play, he was throwing himself on his bed, and saying to his servant girl: "Give me a good hot punch to make me sweat and sleep." The hot punch was coming and was followed by other hot punches, and, while the good pastor was hot in perspiration, his tender-hearted young servant girl was wiping his face and kissing him!

On the last day of the revival, which was Friday, the two Irish priests, who had been invited to preach and to hear the confessions, were suddenly called back to their respective parishes, to attend to dying persons. The English sermon was to be preached by one of them. This was the principal ceremony of the revival. All the parishioners and many Protestants were to be present. As the pastor was under the influence of liquor, and as there was nobody to preach the announced English sermon, Father M. asked of me, as a favor, to deliver the solemn speech. I said I was willing to speak in French. He told me that the sermon was to be in English. I answered that I was not prepared, and that my pronunciation was too bad to preach before such a crowd, and especially before Protestants. That poor priest was nearly crying. He did not know what to do. Finally, I told him: "Well, I will venture to preach for you. As I have two hours to prepare myself, I think I can find something to say."

At the appointed time, I went to church. There were about fifteen hundred persons present. I preached over one hour. After my sermon, over fifty persons came to compliment me, saying that "they had never heard so beautiful a sermon." The pastor himself, who was at the back pews of the church, came to compliment me, saying: "Clerc, you have

astonished me; I would never have expected such things from you. You have been wonderful. I thank you for the service you have rendered to me."

We went to his house. We had a good supper and a few choice drinks. As I felt somewhat tired, after a little talk, I asked permission to retire to my room, to recite my office and go to bed.

Everybody prepared himself also to go to bed. The priest had his room contiguous to mine and the two girls were sleeping in an adjoining room.

When I was in my bed, Father M. opened my door, dressed in his night-dress, and told me: "Clerc, you are a good boy; you have rendered me a great service; I want to reward you. There are two girls in that room. There is one for me and one for you. Come." I looked at him. "Do you joke, sir?" said I. "No, sir; I am in earnest. Come, and follow me." He went. Through curiosity, I jumped out of my bed and looked at him. The fellow was in earnest. He opened the door of the room of the girls, and ascended their bed. He took hold of his servant-girl, and called me loudly to take hold of the other. The other girl was, I think, a good girl. She screamed. I called the priest a fool and I shut my door. I saw nothing more.

This story I have related to many, even to Irish Catholics. Some refused to believe it. But I certify before God that it is true in every particular. May God strike me dead and damn me, if it is not true.

The next day being Saturday, I said to Father M. that I wanted to go home. As I was about twelve miles from the railroad, he said to me:

"Wait—I must go to my mission, which is situated on the railroad. I will take you there with my horse and buggy. You will not need to walk. When you are in my mission, you can take the train and go home."

I waited. But he had never finished gossiping and drinking. We started at one o'clock P. M. Before starting, he took with him a large bottle full of whiskey. From time to time, we stopped to water the horse. While the horse was drinking, Father M. was watering himself with his large bottle. He stopped at the house of several of his Irish farmers, talking nonsense and drinking. When we reached his mission, it was too late for me to take the cars. The last train had passed. I was in great trouble. "Do not be troubled," said to me Father M., "we shall sleep in my mission, and to-morrow, before mass, I will fetch you with my horse to your parish."

He then brought me to the house of a good Irish farmer, to take tea and pass the night. While the tea was being prepared, Father M., complaining of a *violent headache*, threw himself on a bed and began to snore, and slept so soundly that it was impossible to awaken him for tea. I took my tea alone.

When it was time for me to go to bed, I called for a room. I was answered that I had to sleep with Father M., because there was no other room available in the house. I was profoundly humiliated to be obliged to sleep with a drunken priest. But, as I could not do otherwise, I went to bed all dressed.

Father M. was not alone in bed. He had a companion, and that companion was his inseparable bottle of whiskey, which he was opening

every time he awoke. After midnight, I told him: "You cannot drink any more; you must be fasting to say your mass to-morrow." He answered: "Nonsense, a drink does not break the fast." Then, being very kind hearted, he tendered me his bottle, saying: "Clerc, take a good drink, and let the fast alone." He continued his drinking during the whole night. I do not know how he was able to hear confessions and say his mass in the morning. Early in the morning, his good farmer fetched me, with his horse and buggy, to my parish, and I arrived in time to say my mass.

When I had returned to my home, I saw the Irish priest of the town, who was the counsellor of the bishop. I related to him the facts and the danger of a great scandal. A few months after, Father M. was obliged to leave his parish and to go to Ireland.

This scandal is not the only one which took place during my sojourn in that locality. A great many acts of drunkenness and immorality were committed by priests, all over the State.

1.—*Drunkenness.* God is witness that most of the priests I have associated with in the State of New York were, if not real drunkards, at least drinking very heavily. The Irish priest, who was in the same place as myself, though being the counsellor of the bishop, was reputed to drink so hard that, once, when he announced that he would preach a sermon on total abstinence, everybody laughed, saying: "Before preaching on total abstinence, he would do well to take the pledge himself."

Three priests of the neighborhood were especially noted as inveterate drunkards. (I have their names and the names of their parishes.)

One of them was found drunk at the altar, while saying his mass. The next Sunday, his parishioners locked his church and did not allow him to enter it.

Another one was seen by me and by hundreds of persons, at the railroad depot, in a complete state of drunkenness. He was leaning against a pillar of the depot, because he could hardly stand on his feet. Everybody was looking at him with amazement. Though I knew him, I did not dare to go and speak to him. I was close to a policeman who was watching him. That policeman told me: "If that man was not a priest, I would have him arrested on the spot." When the train came, the policeman helped him to ascend the car. Since that time, I have never seen that priest.

2.—*Immorality.* I will quote a few examples as decently as possible. The reader must remember that my aim is not to teach immorality, but only to show what kind of angels Catholic priests are, and if they are not a real curse to society.

A priest of New York, named Baretta, after having given scandal, had run away with a girl, and was leading a married life in Philadelphia.

A priest was married in the city of Elmira and was dealing there in grains.

Rev. Fitzgerald, pastor of Lowville, and brother of the Catholic bishop of Little Rock, had turned Protestant and taken a wife.

The priest of Clayton had been suspended by the bishop for illicit relations with a girl, and was reputed to lead, with her, a married life in Canada.

The priest of Carthage was accused of illicit relations with his female organist. The accusations became so strong, that he was obliged to leave the place and pass to the diocese of Albany.

The priest of Rosiere, Father R., was so constantly accused of the same sin, that he asked from the bishop an exeat to pass to the diocese of Buffalo. As that exeat did not come fast enough, he came every day to me and to the Irish priest of the city, saying in a feverish and excited tone: "Pray, ask my dismissals from the bishop. I can remain no longer in that cursed parish. If I remain, I shall die or become crazy."

The cause of his excitement was discovered, a few weeks after, by his illustrious successor.

That successor was a young priest from Savoy, Europe. He pretended to know medicine, law, Latin, Greek, German, English, French, Italian, Spanish, Chinese and two idioms of the Indian language. He boasted to have been in Palestine, in Rome, in all countries of Europe and America. He pretended, also, to have been general chaplain of the French army during the Franco-German war, and, at the end of the war, to have been sent by the French government to certain missions, as an interpreter, in Mexico, Brazil, Peru, etc. He wore on his breast, a gold chain valued at four hundred dollars, and a watch valued at seven hundred dollars, and was dressed like a prince. Though he was only thirty-two years of age, he spoke like a master, and priests and laymen were obliged to hear him in silence. The name of that priest was Perret.

He had been for a while the guest of the bishop, and pretended to be especially in his favor. He had made to His Lordship several presents of honey, claret and brandy, and, in return, as a special mark of his esteem, His Lordship had presented him with a little dog. Perret showed the dog of the bishop everywhere, and presented it, especially to his parishioners, as a proof of his intimacy with the prelate, and of the extraordinary power he had received to bark at them like a dog, and even to bite them on their legs.

From the beginning, he told them their facts from the pulpit. In his mouth, they were so many rascals. Since the minister of God said so, those poor people believed themselves to be guilty, and some of them, especially women and girls, went to him to confess their sins.

After their confessions, Perret came to me triumphant. "My parish," said he, "is converted. They have all come to me for confession. Oh! the good people! the poor people! They have been lost by rascally priests. That infamous priest R. is a true devil. I am going immediately to the bishop to have him suspended in Buffalo. He deserves State prison. I have here in my pocket, against him, the most awful declarations. He has outraged a woman in the church, before the blessed sacrament exposed. He has violated several young ladies, and especially a young girl, twelve years old. There is a warrant against him, and he will be arrested. He has left Rosiere eight hundred dollars in debt. He is a true rascal."

I asked Mr. Perret: "How do you know all those details?" He answered: "I heard their confessions, and, after their confessions, they

made to me their written declarations. I have all that in my pocket." I told him: "Since you know all those details by confession, you must not speak of them to any one, except to the bishop, if you have obtained the permission from your penitents."

Mr. Perret did not pay much attention to my words. That hero in morality and zeal went to tell his tale to the bishop, and came back with the idea that he was a great man. He went to his parish, and, before trying to regulate his spiritual affairs, he began to regulate the temporal.

Every Sunday, in his church, his sermons, delivered with an imperturbable authority which sometimes degenerated into insolence, were ending with these words: "Money, money, I want money. I want one thousand dollars from Rosiere, five hundred from the Cape, ten dollars for a marriage, three dollars for a christening, five dollars for a high mass and one dollar for a low mass, no more, no less. I shall have a horse and a buggy for my own use, but not for yours. If you want me for your sick-calls, you shall come to me with your own buggies and horses; otherwise, I will not go. You are obliged to supply my house with a rich furniture. But, as all of you are jackasses, I shall buy it myself according to my taste. It is in your interest to get the best goods. Do not be troubled. As I have more intelligence than you, I will buy, I will present you the bills and you shall pay. If you resist, I go away, and, as I have the full power of the bishop, I will leave you twenty years without a priest. You are a stupid and wicked population. You have dangerous tongues. Yes, my jackasses."

The people of Rosiere can certify that this was the general tone and meaning of his sermons.

Once, in my home, that grand preacher was boasting of his insolences. I ventured to tell him: "You are greatly mistaken. If you continue, you will not remain two months in Rosiere." He answered bravely: "You are a jackass. You are not styled to live in America. Myself, I am a Yankee, I am an American citizen. Look at the corner of my eye and give us a rest." That expression *give us a rest* was very familiar to him. I gave him the rest; but his parishioners did not give it to him. They soon found out that he was a humbug and that he had come there for their money and not for their souls. They complained of his exactions and insolences, and finally abandoned his church, refusing to pay him a cent.

To show to his people that he had friends, and that his conduct was approved by priests, he invited me to go and see him on a certain day. When I arrived there, I found his house locked and nobody in. As I was obliged to wait several hours for the return of the train to go home, I went to pay a visit to one of his trustees, whom I had met at the house of one of my parishioners, whose relative he was. I avoided speaking of my colleague. The trustee asked me what salary I received from my church. I answered, without any malice: "I receive eight hundred dollars." The trustee, after my departure, repeated my words, which were soon thrown in the face of the priest.

The next Sunday, Mr. Perret denounced me from his pulpit as being the cause of his troubles, and said that I would pay very dear for

what I had said to the trustee. That priest was not only a talker, but a man of action. Though he despised my predecessor, and had spoken very badly of him, he went to see him and conspired with him to ruin me in the esteem of other priests and of my parishioners. He went to the bishop and to many priests, and not only slandered me, but ridiculed me. This was told me by a good Belgian priest, who was my friend. He went farther; he paid a visit to my parishioners and tried to arouse them against me.

There was not much to say about me in my private life, and in the exercise of my functions. I regularly said my mass, and made good sermons. I taught children the catechism. I visited the sick and the poor. I had organized a fair which had produced a sum of six hundred dollars for the benefit of the church. During the Lenten season, I had had a series of sermons, the effect of which was to bring almost all my parishioners to receive the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist. I boarded in a hotel, led a bachelor's life, and lived regularly in the presence of about eighty boarders, both Catholics and Protestants. Never a lady was seen in my room. My special companion in the hotel was my neighbor, who was the principal of the business college of the place. My life did not give the least chance for them to attack me.

But they spread bad rumors from distant countries, from France and New York, and their wicked talk found credence with some of my parishioners, who left my church.

Until that time, I had been on good terms with the Irish priest of that town. I went to him for confession. Once, annoyed by the intrigues of priests, I told him in confession: "I am discouraged. I do not know that I shall remain here. I think I shall return to France."

After the confession, I sat on a chair, and the priest, against all the rules of theology, addressed me thus: "So, you intend to go back to France?" I answered: "Yes, I think I will."

Some days after, the bishop wrote me a letter, in which he alluded to my "*idea of returning to France.*"

That allusion astounded me. "How does the bishop know of my idea of returning to France?" I said to myself. "Of two things, one is true. Either my confessor has revealed my confession, or the bishop has been illuminated by the Holy Ghost. As I did not think that the bishop was holy enough to be illuminated by the Holy Ghost, I concluded that my confessor had revealed my confession."

I complained of it to the Irish priest. We had a few hard words, at the end of which I said: "After all, you have not revealed precisely a sin, but a confidence, which could wrong me in the opinion of the bishop. I am willing to pay no attention to it, and to be, as before, your friend." We shook hands. We took a drink of whiskey. The priest gave me all the exterior marks of friendship. But, on his part, it was the kiss of Judas. As the facts will prove, he considered and represented me to his fellow-priests, as a *dangerous man*, and plotted with them the means of getting rid of me.

As I have said, Mr. Perret, by his foolish actions and talk had lost the confidence of his parishioners, who did not go any more to his church. In consequence of their desertion, he asked from the bishop *dismissorial*

letters, which were granted to him, and in which his lordship expressed his wishes for his happiness *in new fields of labor*. After reception of those letters, he came to room and board with the Irish priest of the town who employed him as a tool against me. He went to see almost all my parishioners, and tried to indispose them against me.

He preached, in St. Patrick's church, a sermon in English, of which a favorable report was made in the newspapers; but people said that this report had been written by himself. He published in the newspapers that his conduct in Rosiere had been approved by the bishop and that he had in reserve a *large field of labor*.

A very cunning answer having been made to him in the newspaper *The Post*, Perret made reply in the *Morning Dispatch*, in which he insinuated that "clergymen were the authors of that epistle;" and, to have me know that he suspected me, he sent me a copy of the *Morning Dispatch* wrapped in a paper taken from a shoe-store where he was going every day, to mind the soles (souls) of Christians.

Being publicly attacked by Perret, I prepared myself to give him a public answer. But, in order not to increase a ridiculous scandal, I judged proper to publish nothing, and to send him the following letter:

"TO REVEREND PERRET, ex-pastor of Rosiere, ex-Jesuit, ex-capuchin, ex-physician-dentist, ex-missionary, ex-chaplain general of the Franco-Prussian war, ex-ambassador of France in Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Chili, etc., future chaplain of the army of Don Carlos, in Spain, etc. etc.:

My illustrious friend—Every one thinks that you have a dangerous sickness. As a good friend, I come to administer to you a pill, which, properly taken, will, I am sure, procure your salvation.

That disease, as I know, is lodged in your brain, and is produced by an excess of self-esteem, accompanied by a lack of judgment.

It is painful to me, but I must cure your excessive pride and put an end to your foolish bragging.

A good priest, my dear friend, does the work of God without any commotion. "*Non in commotione Dominus.*"

What is the use of those interminable letters published in all the papers of this city, in which, not satisfied with having slandered your whole congregation, you are daring to slander several of your fellow-priests, and to make against them mischievous insinuations? You give, indeed, to understand, in the *Dispatch* of the 21st instant, that some clergymen have been able to write the letter contained in the *Post* of the 18th. You do not reveal, it is true, their names. But, as you have publicly and repeatedly accused myself and Father A., even in your church, to be the cause of your troubles in Rosiere, it is easy to find out what is your aim.

It is too much, Father Perret. There is no need to justify ourselves. Do you not know that the style of a letter reveals its author? The letter in the *Post* is written in a better style than yours and mine, and the letter which appeared in the *Dispatch* of the 10th comes evidently from your own pen. Are you not ashamed to publish yourself, your own qualities, and to boast yourself as you do?

You have solemnly published in the *Times* and in the *Dispatch*, that, last Sunday, you delivered, in St. Patrick, an eloquent sermon on *Divine*

Grace, in which there was no brogue at all, and in which you were understood by everybody. Well, my dear friend, you have beautifully described a gift of God which is wanting in you. For it is said: '*God resists the superb and gives his Grace to the humble.*'

You speak of the *large circle* of your friends. I should be glad to know their names. I should be glad to know those you will have in the large field of labor, which will be the theatre of your future exploits.

Such a pride, such an intemperance of language as yours, is not fit to keep many friends, and I know that here, laymen, priests and even Protestants, are tired of your presumption.

It is wonderful to see that a genius of your race, (knowing seven living languages, possessing a fortune of one hundred thousand dollars, having occupied so many distinguished positions), should be shamefully rejected even by Rosiere, and thrown into the gutter by the bishops. What will become of you? I do not know. But, I think that, unless you pass a few years in a house of correction, you will be good for nothing, except to go, at the example of Don Quixote, to fight with the Carlists in Spain, or to show in the parlors of a lunatic asylum.

Yours, P. M. CLERC."

As Mr. Perret had also accused Father A. of having fostered his troubles, and as he accused *clergymen* of having written against him in the paper, *The Post*, I sent to that good priest a telegram, praying him to come and see me concerning a serious matter.

Father A. came. He showed me a forged letter, written by Perret, which he read from his pulpit as coming from the bishop, and condemning the conduct of his parishioners. He told me that, during the fifteen days he had been living in the same house with him, he had never seen him say a word of breviary. He could not understand how the Irish priest of the city dared to give hospitality to such a humbug, who had the impudence to attack, in newspapers, his fellow-priests and his parishioners. On leaving me, he went to the bishop to complain of Perret, and of the Irish priest. I made, myself, the same complaint to the Irish priest of the city.

This cowardly and deceitful fellow, in order to increase the wrath of Perret against me, told him that he was obliged to send him away on my account.

Perret prepared his baggage to depart, and, when he departed, he sent me a letter full of threats, saying among other things that I was a *dangerous man*, that everybody was hating me, that I was watched, and that I was on the eve of being put out of the diocese. He concluded by this warning: "Look out, Clerc, look out."

After having received that letter, I wrote a few words to the Irish priest, in which I said in conclusion: "How did that genius penetrate the secrets of the gods? Is it you, reverend sir, or the bishop, who made to him such revelations? As I do not think it is the bishop, I think it is yourself alone, so much the more that Perret wrote those things from your own house. From and in your house, reverend sir, Catholic priests are publicly slandered and insulted. Look out for yourself."

Being afraid of having compromised himself, the Irish priest sent to me his assistant, to ask me to go to his house. I went. He wanted to

see the letter of Perret. I gave it to him. After having read it, he said: "All that comes from his own brain. He is a fool. I never spoke to him about you. You must not pay attention to that letter. Throw it in the fire." Afterwards we ridiculed Perret. We took our tea, and our customary whiskey. When I went away, the priest shook hands warmly with me, saying: "good-bye." But, on retiring, I said to myself: "*Hypocrite !*"

I was sure that he had employed Perret against me; that, since the time I had complained that he had revealed my confession, he considered and represented me as a *dangerous man*, and that his intention was to make an holocaust of me.

Soon after, a Canadian priest, by the name of Delphos, came with my predecessor to pay a visit to my parishioners. He said openly that he intended to become their pastor, that they needed a man of their own nationality and not a man expelled from France.

On hearing that, I wrote to my bishop the following letter:

"April 27th, 1874.

RIGHT REV. AND DEAR SIR: I have the honor to inform you that I am perfectly aware of the endeavors of Rev. X., your counsellor, and his auxiliaries against me, and that not a particle of their mean doings is unknown to me.

From the time I wrote to you and complained to him about the revelation he made of my confession, considering me a dangerous man, Rev. X has tried to get rid of me. Representing me as such to his fellow-priests, he has skillfully created a party of priests and laymen to act against me.

Pretending to be my friend, even speaking hypocritically well of me, he is giving to others arms and bullets to fight me.

Though despising Mr. Perret, he has given him hospitality, and has employed him as a tool to crush me. He has invited other priests to come to my parish and to spread bad rumors about me. One of them has even announced his intention to come soon and take possession of my parish.

Tell those stupid and wicked priests that it is time for them to shut their mouths and to hold their tongues. If they do not stop, I shall be obliged to justify myself, and to reveal to the public the reality about them and about me. It is my sincerest wish not to give any scandal. But, if they force me, I shall speak, and it will be perhaps the greatest scandal which ever happened in America. Yours, P. M. CLERC."

The next day the *Morning Dispatch* contained the following item: "Scandal is fed by as many streams as the Nile, and there is often as much difficulty in tracing it to its source."

I sent it to the bishop, telling him that this article was believed to aim at his counsellor and at his priests. I had no answer.

Several families sent me notice that they gave up their pews in my church, with information that others would follow their example. I did not know their motives, but I knew that it was in consequence of the machinations of priests.

My room in the hotel was adjoining the room of the principal of the business college of the city. That gentleman, my friend, knowing

the trickeries of priests and their intention to starve me to death, offered me a partnership in his college for the sum of seven hundred dollars. He offered to teach me book-keeping, in order that I might teach the elementary classes. I should also teach French, Latin and Greek, while he would teach penmanship, telegraphy and the higher course of book-keeping.

As my parish was not very large, and as many did not want to support me, I thought I could teach in the college, and, at the same time, continue my functions as a priest. I accepted the proposition. I agreed to give him seven hundred dollars, and I began immediately to take from him lessons in book-keeping.

On hearing my determination, my enemies became bolder and bolder. The volcano was spreading more and more in its ravages. Other families resigned their pews. The two trustees resigned their functions without giving any reason for it.

Anxious to know what was the motive for so many desertions, I went through the city to find out. All said that they knew nothing.

At last, a good friend of mine revealed the whole plot. He told me that a cousin of the Irish priest, who was one of my trustees, was trying to prevent the people from paying their pew-rents; that he was going on secretly and prudently; that, to a great many, he was giving no reason for his advice; but, a few upon whom he could rely, he made believe that I had been expelled from France and from New York for cause of immorality.

On hearing that infamous slander, I exclaimed: "Oh! the criminal priests! this is their work! Well," I said, "they force me; I will justify myself. I can prove, as clear as the daylight, the crimes of those priests, and my own innocence, and I will do it."

I left my friend. I went to see the principal of the college and told him what I had heard. "Send those priests to the d—," he said in his disgust, "come with me; we shall live without them."

In order not to be troubled any more by the bishop, either in my new enterprise or in the publication of the facts concerning my leaving France and New York—in order to become entirely independent—I sent my resignation to the bishop. Through contempt, I sent it to him by telegram, without giving any motive for it; and, to consummate the fact at once, I inserted the same in the newspaper, the *Daily Times*.

When the Irish priest read in the paper the news of my resignation, he hypocritically exclaimed before some of my friends: "I am sorry! I liked Father Clerc! He was a good priest!"

When my friends reported to me those words, I told them: "You may say to Father X. that *I call him a hypocrite*."

The bishop did not yet know my intentions for the future. On account of the revelation of my confession, he probably thought that my intention was to go back to France. So, I received from His Lordship, on the same day, the following letter:

"X—, July 1, 1874.

Reverend Dear Sir—Your communication was received this morning, and, in acknowledging the same, I would respectfully inform you that your resignation of the charge of X— church is hereby accepted."

To justify myself, I began to write my little story. While writing it, I read it to many Catholics and Protestants, who came to see me. All of them approved it. In their judgment, it was nothing but an act of justice to denounce those criminal hypocrites, who, to cover their own disorders, were not afraid to ruin an innocent person. Several of my Catholic parishioners swore to me that they would have nothing more whatever to do with priests.

When my work was complete, I brought it to my bishop. As His Lordship received me very amicably, I told him: "Reverend sir, in sending to you my resignation, I gave you no reason for it. I bring you my reasons in writing. Will you read them?" The bishop answered me: "But you have a whole volume; I cannot read all that." He added: "Father Clerc, have I not been kind to you? Have I done any thing against you? If those priests have acted against you, I cannot help it. It is not my fault. If you want to go back to France, or to pass to another diocese, I will give you my best recommendations." I thanked His Lordship, saying: "Reverend Sir, I am disgusted with priests. They are a dirty set. I do not believe any more in them. Wherever I go, they are all the same. They know that I have against them too many facts, and, as they consider me a dangerous man, they will represent me as such and try to injure me everywhere. I trust in the mercy of God, who knows my conduct and theirs, and, since the priests do not want me to work in the sanctuary, I shall work outside. I have made an agreement with the principal of the college of my own place to be a partner with him. I think I can make my living. I ask nothing more from the church."

The bishop tried to dissuade me from my determination, and offered again to give me the best testimonials. I refused them, saying that my determination was taken, and that I had no need of those testimonials. Finally, I bade him farewell and returned to my own place.

I remained there three months, studying, from the principal of the business college, book-keeping and mathematics, and preparing myself to teach in his college at the re-opening of the school.

As some Catholics were trying to slander me among Protestants, the latter answered them: "He is too good to be a Catholic." In fact, I had no idea of abjuring the Catholic faith. My only object was to make my living by teaching in a college. As I had a great many good friends among the Canadians, Irish and Protestants, in order to keep friendship with all, I went to no church at all, saying that my room was my own sanctuary and that I could serve God in it. My conduct was generally approved. As my enemies said that I would turn Protestant and marry, I answered that I had no idea of the kind, but that, if I should choose to do it, I would do better than those priests, who, living as libertines, have the hypocrisy to take at the altar the mask of angels.

My presence in the city was very far from pleasing the Irish priest and his associates. To have at their door a priest who was talking and writing against them, and intended to stay there, was dangerous for them. They represented me more than ever, as "*a very dangerous man*," and they did everything in their power to make me leave the city.

At first, they tried to arouse against me the Canadian population, by

preventing the bishop from sending a successor, and spreading the rumor that, as long as I was there, they would have no priest.

In the second place, they represented me to some fanatic Irishmen as a traitor to the Catholic cause, and induced them to knock me down. I received a great many threatening letters, and some men were sent to me saying, that *my life was not safe in that place*.

In order to show what was serious in their threats, I must reproduce an article of the San Francisco *Chronicle*, August 18th, 1881:

"AN EX-PRIEST ROUGHLY HANDLED.—Father O'Connor, president of the independent Catholic church, attempted to deliver a lecture "at X—— last evening. He was interrupted by a mob, who hustled "him from the platform and seized his manuscript. O'Connor was escorted to his hotel by a constable. Warrants have been issued for the "arrest of the leaders of the mob."

At the same time, slanders of the worst kind were spread about me.

Two ideas were in my mind:

On one hand, I wanted to punish, by my presence in the place, the rascality of those priests who had put me out of the church.

On the other hand, I had in prospect the continual attacks of Catholics. I thought that my life would be more happy, if I should go and live in some remote place. So, I made up my mind to come and make my living in obscurity and peace in San Francisco.

Before leaving, I obtained from a Presbyterian minister of the place a letter certifying that I was enjoying a good reputation, both for honesty and good morals. I presented that letter to the pastor and elders of St. John's Presbyterian church of San Francisco, and by virtue of that letter, I was received "a member of the church."

VI.

A Particular Case of Catholic Priesthood Depravity.

The following details have reference to the horrible persecutions of which I have been the object, since I have left the Catholic priesthood. Though these details are rather personal to me, they are of such nature as to interest the public, because they reveal the evil spirit of Catholic priests, their cruelty, their intolerance, their fanaticism, and, especially, the power they have over a gang of ignorant Catholics, whom they manipulate as they please, to accomplish their criminal designs. They also reveal what those priests would do against all those who are not Catholics, if they ever should come in power in this country.

When I speak of Catholics, whom they employ as their tools, I do not mean all Catholics. There are good and sensible French, German, Italian, Spanish, and even Irish Catholics, who can listen to reason and stand an argument. But there is a class of Irish Catholics so ignorant, so fanatic and so cruel, that, under the command of priests, they are ready to insult, knock down, boycott, rob and even murder anybody who is pointed out to them as dangerous to the holy Catholic cause.

To any sensible man, it must seem that, since Catholic priests did their best to put me out of the church, their imperative duty was not to interfere with me any more, and to let me entirely alone.

Since the church had been unfaithful to me, I thought that I was free from all engagements with the church, and could act as a free man.

Since my aim was to live in obscurity and to earn my daily bread by the sweat of my brow, without interfering with priests or with their creed and practices, they had no right to trouble me.

Whether I was in the way of salvation or not, it was my own lookout. I thought that no Catholic had the charge of my soul any more, and that God was good enough to judge, absolve or condemn, either myself or those who had put me out of the church.

But the fanatic Irish Catholics of San Francisco had not the decency and prudence to let me alone. With a fury which has no equal but the rage of the demons in hell, for the past fourteen years they have harassed and injured me. For the past fourteen years, I have been the object of the most cruel persecution that a man can endure, not only from one man, but from a combination of men and women, who had for pass-word: "Let us unite to crush him." I have been ruined by Catholic influences, kept away from positions I could otherwise obtain, lost some positions which helped me to live. Whether I was in business or teaching in schools or private families, they have undermined and wronged me. I have been beaten by Irish Catholic servant-girls. I have been boycotted, ill-treated, hooted at on the streets and humiliated in the most merciless manner by the members of a church which pre-

tends to be the Holy Church of God, the only representative of justice, charity and mercy on earth.

I will demonstrate this by the revelation of a few facts which are perfectly known in San Francisco, and which can be easily proved:

It must be known that the Catholic church, though condemning all secret societies, is itself a secret society, and has a well-organized secret police. All my movements were watched, and my residence and occupation were very soon known.

By the recommendation of some French people, who knew nothing about my character, I went into business, in co-partnership with a Belgian, named August Derre, who was represented to me as a smart business man and a past-master French Odd-Fellow, and I invested in his business all the money I had, amounting to the sum of four thousand dollars.

I was no sooner in business, than a Catholic priest, unknown to me, made his appearance in the store, and renewed his visits almost every day, having long conversations with my partner, but never addressing a word to me.

Why did that Catholic priest come so often to pay his visits to a member of a secret society which the church condemns? Why did he speak so friendly to him, while he never addressed a word to me?

I found very soon that the business was not going on as it had been represented to me, and that I was going to my ruin. By the advice of friends, after eight months of hard work, I sold to my partner my share in the business for the sum of thirty-two hundred dollars.

A bill of sale was made and signed by my partner and myself and by our two lawyers. The bill of sale was committed to the keeping of my lawyer until the payment, which was to be effected at my lawyer's office, within the space of eight days.

When I went for my money, my lawyer told me that my bill of sale had been stolen from him, and that no money had come. He advised me to attach the store. I followed his advice, took all the necessary steps and paid the needed money to have the store seized. But eight days elapsed before any seizure being made. When I asked why no action was taken in the matter, I was answered that the officer of the law was out of town, in San Jose. Was not that man in Catholic churches, plotting my ruin with Catholic priests?

While this highway robbery was being perpetrated under the protection of the holy Catholic church, and while my partner was emptying the store, he was publicly deriding me as an Ex-Catholic priest, though I had never revealed to him my character; he was boasting of having ruined me. He had no scruple about it. Why? Because he was approved by Catholics and absolved by priests.

As I was a member of St. John's Presbyterian Church, Mrs. George Hearst, who belonged to that church, advised me to teach the French language, and employed me, during three years, as her own teacher and the teacher of her son Willie, now the proprietor of the San Francisco *Examiner*. While I was teaching her, she induced me to prepare a French grammar, promising me money to print it, and assistance to introduce it in schools. I accepted the proposition, and I was about two years preparing a voluminous French grammar.

My business, as a teacher, became prosperous, though Catholics tried all the time to injure me. It is a remarkable fact that every time I was employed by Catholics, as soon as they found out who I was, I was immediately discharged. Not only they did not employ me, but they induced, by means known to them, Protestants and Jews to follow their example. I was successively employed in two private schools from which they succeeded in driving me away.

The first school was conducted by two Protestant ladies, who were pleased with my way of teaching. But, they had a bigoted Irish Catholic sister-in-law who induced them to discharge me. So, they thanked me for my services, and made me lose a sum of twenty-one dollars, which they owe me still.

The second school was conducted by an old Protestant lady, who kept, at the same time, a boarding house. For my trouble in teaching two hours a day, I received free board and lodging. On account of an accident, the landlady had no boarders for over one month. Though she owned the house, she was in debt, and several times I advanced her money. When I wanted to be indemnified for the board to which I was entitled, and which she had not given to me, and also to be repaid for the advanced money, she answered me that she owed me nothing. I sued her for the sum of one hundred and nine dollars. The case appeared before the Catholic judge, Ryan. There were present, against me, about nine Catholic witnesses, some of whom had abused me in the house of my landlady, and some were entirely unknown to me. I proved my case as clearly as it could be proved. I was assuredly entitled to an indemnity. Nevertheless, His Catholic Honor, judge Ryan, dismissed my case without giving any reason for it. My lawyer saw the judge after the trial and said: "Why did you dismiss that case? Professor Clerc has perfectly established his right. It is simply shameful." The judge answered: "I had my reasons; I need not tell them to you."

Seeing that Catholics were persecuting me even in courts, I said to Mrs. Hearst that it was of no use for me to publish my grammar, because Catholics would prevent its sale. I told her: "Madam, I make you a present of my grammar. Publish it under any name you please. I have something better to publish. I have in my possession very strong documents against Catholic priests. If, out of those documents, I can make an interesting pamphlet which will be of some use to the public, will you give, to print it, the money you have promised for the printing of my grammar?" "I will," said Mrs. Hearst. Immediately, I began the composition of my pamphlet.

After one month and a half of writing, I brought a little pamphlet of three hundred pages to Mrs. George Hearst, at the Baldwin Hotel.

When she had read it, she told me: "It is awful! It is frightful! That pamphlet must be published! I will give you the money for its publication."

To be sure of its merits, I asked of her the permission to submit it, for examination, to Dr. Hemphill, pastor of Calvary Presbyterian church. She consented. Dr. Hemphill had it in his keeping for two months. He made several speeches concerning it, and, at that time, I received

the greatest marks of esteem from his wife and from his congregation.

In the meantime, Mrs. George Hearst had secreted herself. I could not meet her any more. The last time I called on her, I was told that she had gone to New York. My suspicion was aroused, but I kept silent.

I had been teaching, for about one year, the four grown daughters of an Irish Catholic lady, living on Mission street. Those ladies, as well as their mother, had a favorable opinion of me, as a gentleman and as a teacher.

When vacation came, they stopped their lessons, with the promise of resuming them in the beginning of July.

After vacation, I went to see the mother with regard to my lessons. That lady received me in a manner indicating that she was uneasy about something. I asked of her what was the matter. She answered me hesitatingly that nothing was the matter. As I pressed her to speak, she told me: "Have you not been a Catholic priest?" I answered, "Yes madam." "Why did you leave?" "Madam, if I should tell you my motives, your hair would stand erect on your head." "Oh! tell me your motives." "My motives are exposed in a pamphlet of three hundred pages which I intend to publish very soon." "Oh! give me that pamphlet." "Madam, it is in the hands of an honorable lady who approves of its publication and will even give the money for its printing." "Oh, I know that lady!" "Madam, I give you no name and you do not know who that lady is." "That lady is Mrs. George Hearst." "You are wrong, madam, to mention any name, because you cannot prove it." "I can prove it, because a friend of mine saw you carrying your pamphlet to her at Baldwin's hotel. You must bring that pamphlet to me. You are a good man. My daughters esteem you. I am well acquainted with Archbishop Alemany and we will have you reinstated in your functions as a priest." "I am very sorry, madam, I have lost all faith in Catholicism." "Oh! you believe still." "No, madam, I do not believe any more in holy water. I cannot preach what I do not believe. I cannot be a hypocrite." "If you do not want to preach, we shall employ you in our colleges." "Madam, I despise too much your priests to live in company with them." "If you do not want to teach in our colleges, Archbishop Alemany is very influential; he can obtain for you a situation as a French teacher in Berkeley University. You must go and see Archbishop Alemany. He is a good man. Go and see him; it is to your advantage." I left the good lady without promising anything.

When I came home, I found on my table a card inviting me to go to the mansion of His Lordship. I went, at all hazards, to see what propositions should be made to me. I will sum up our conversation. Among other things, His Lordship told me: "*Tu es sacerdos in æternum.*" (You are a priest forever.) You must return to your priestly duties." "How can I do it, my Lord?" I answered, "I have lost all faith in Catholicism." "Oh, yes, you still believe, and you can become a good priest again." "It would require ten years, my Lord, to make a good priest out of me." "I can make a priest of you in three days, and put you in a parish," said His Lordship. "Impossible, my Lord," said I, "I cannot be a hypocrite." As I saw that the good old man, whom I

considered as a real good bishop, had no other intention for me but to make me a priest again, I bowed to him respectfully and went away.

The next Sunday, His Lordship had a circular read in all churches recommending all the faithful to throw into the flames and burn all books attacking religion.

Dr. Hemphill and his congregation were surrounding me with their sympathy. They were in favor of the publication of my pamphlet, and promised to stand by me.

As I had started that affair in common with Mrs. George Hearst, I wrote to her in New York that my pamphlet was ready for print, and that Calvary church was in favor of its publication. I received no answer. I wrote to her again, and begged of her to send me the promised money. She wrote to Dr. Hemphill that she would give three hundred dollars for the publication of my grammar, but she wanted to have nothing to do with my pamphlet. A little after, she sent back to me from New York, without a word of explanation, my manuscript grammar, which she had sent there, some time before, to be printed.

A few months after, her husband announced his candidacy for the high office of governor of California, on the Irish Catholic democratic ticket. On hearing that announcement, all my friends, who knew my case, told me: "Professor, you are sold. You will never get anything from Mrs. Hearst. She is in the hands of Catholics."

As I had yet received no money from her, I informed her of what was generally said, and entreated her to send me the promised money, for the reason that I had the reputation of writing against priests, without having the benefit of it.

My letter having remained unanswered, I wrote her another one, in which I reproached her with treating me like a dog which she had set against other dogs with the promise of her protection, and with abandoning me, when I was in the heat of the fight.

I threatened to publish in my pamphlet our correspondence, which was very compromising for her, and to sue her for damages, on account of having made me lose my time, by false promises, in composing hard and tedious books.

Mrs. Hearst, frightened, sent word to an Irish Catholic lawyer to settle the matter with me. I was called at the lawyer's office. Overlooking all the wild talks which took place there, I will only say this: Mrs. Hearst acknowledged that she had been too long in giving the promised money. She was willing to loan me four hundred dollars on a mortgage taken on my grammar; but she wanted to have nothing to do with my pamphlet. "Why does she want to take a mortgage on my grammar?" I said, "since she has sent it back to me from New York." "Your grammar is too voluminous and unsalable," said the lawyer. "You must compose a shorter one, and Mrs. Hearst will take a mortgage on it." "If I compose a new grammar," I said, "Do you assure me that she will continue her protection and give me the help of her influence to introduce it in schools?" "That I can assure you," said the lawyer. "Mrs. Hearst has no bad feelings against you. She acknowledges she has been wrong in deferring so long what she had promised. She considers you a true gentleman. She will put under foot all the past, and treat you as in the first stage of your acquaintance."

Trusting the lawyer, I handed to him all the compromising letters of Mrs. Hearst. I signed the mortgage on my grammar. I received her four hundred dollars and I went home to compose the new work which was recommended to me.

Thinking that the lawyer, being a Catholic, and that Mrs. Hearst, being nearly so, would induce Catholics not to trouble me any more, I said I would not publish my pamphlet. I had then an interview with Reverend Father Montgomery, the secretary of Archbishop Alemany, and I told him, that, if he could induce Catholics to let me alone, I would never write anything against the church. The priest agreed to it. Apparently, from that time, the priests showed me some marks of friendship. Father Montgomery paid me several visits, in which he tried to convert me, not by his argumentations, for he confessed that articles of faith cannot be demonstrated, but by advising me to pray to God. He loaned me also several books in which I saw no clearer than I can see in a large bottle of ink.

While the priests were apparently flattering me, their Catholic emissaries were undermining me on the sly and taking away from me all the patronage they could. A Catholic French teacher, by the name of Lamare, was directed to publish a weekly French newspaper, in which he attacked my method of teaching, and to send it to the families who employed me as a teacher. I made a refutation of his theory in a printed pamphlet of four compact pages, which I distributed among my friends and in many educational institutions. Though I demonstrated by the most powerful arguments the futility of his system, I did not gain much by it.

When I had finished the composition of my new grammar, I sent to Mrs. Hearst a few words about it. I told her that I wanted to repay her and redeem my mortgage, and I prayed her to continue me her favor for the introduction of my book in schools. I had no answer. I asked of Father Montgomery to write to her in my behalf and to induce her to find for me a position in the East, for the reason that I was too well known here as a priest and entirely in the way of Catholics. Father Montgomery apparently complied with my wishes. He wrote to Mrs. Hearst a letter in which he expressed my views. To make me believe that he was in earnest, he gave to me the letter unsealed, in order that I might read it, and afterwards mail it. Mrs. Hearst answered me indirectly that she wanted to have nothing more to do with me. How could she answer in such a way the requests of the secretary of the archbishop, who was at the head of the Irish Catholic Democratic party? Did she not receive on the sly a letter contrary to the one which was handed to me? At the same time, I heard that August Derre, who owes me still the sum of three thousand two hundred dollars, had become very rich and was living in San Francisco. As a priest had induced him to ruin me, I asked Father Montgomery, as a priest, to induce him to do justice to me. Father Montgomery promised me, at first, to do what he could, but finally wrote to me that he could not find the residence of Mr. Derre.

Knowing that the police force and the detectives are pretty well in the power of priests, I realized that Father Montgomery was fooling

me, and I wrote him a letter intimating that he was acting with me rather as a politician than as a priest, and that there was no more use for me to correspond with him.

From that time, my business, which had been pretty good for seven or eight years, began to decline. Believing that Catholics were secretly undermining me and trying to take away from me all means of support, I wrote to Archbishop Riordan the following letter:

“SAN FRANCISCO, January 18th, 1888.

“MOST REVEREND SIR: I have the honor of directly addressing “Your Lordship and of making a desperate appeal to your good sense “and wisdom, (1) to obtain the redress of real wrongs done to me by “Catholics and their political allies; (2) to prevent a scandal which I “sincerely wish to avert and which, if not averted, will be, I am sure “of it, one of the greatest scandals of the nineteenth century.” (I then substantially related all that is contained in the present pamphlet.)

“If tell I you all this, Most Reverend Sir, it is not to threaten you, “but to show you what is the matter.

“You must admit that I have been prudent, forbearing, patient, “and that I do my best not to come before the public in a light which “would disgrace anybody.

“If my last efforts are unheeded, the responsibility of the scandal “will fall, not upon me, but on those who will have foolishly provoked “it. And, to discard all responsibility, I keep a copy of this letter, to “be put at the head of my pamphlet, in case I am compelled to publish “it.

“Your Lordship knows, as well as myself, that it is easier to pre- “vent scandals than to repair them, and that, if the first step a man “takes is the hardest, when he is on his way, nothing but death can “stop him. If I begin to write against Catholics, be sure that I shall “be as hard on them as Martin Luther was in his time. Should I see “two hundred millions of Catholics before me, I would not recede one “inch. They can kill me, if they please. If they do, I do not care. “I am fifty-five years of age, and I feel that I have lived nearly enough. “Before going ahead, I will make my will in behalf of Protestant and “Jewish charitable institutions, to the exclusion of Catholics. If I can- “not publish my works during my life, I will bequeath them to those “institutions, with the request to publish them after my death. And, “when I die, no matter how, if I can utter a word, I will hurl to the “head of the haughty, intolerant Catholic church this baneful epithet: “‘Sodomite!’”

Yours respectfully,

P. M. CLERC.”

After reception of my letter, His Grace went on a trip to Europe. Will he come back with sufficient information to destroy the correctness and force of my pamphlet? I defy him to do it.

Meanwhile, Catholics seized another opportunity to injure me and to destroy my reliability. This occurred in a libel-suit in which I was subpœnaed to appear in court as an interpreter of a vile article, inserted, against Professor Larcher, in a scurrilous French sheet, called *Le Bayard*.

I did not care to appear in court in such a case. In fact, after having been subpœnaed, I wrote to His Honor, Judge Hornblower, a res-

pectful letter in which I asked him to release me from appearing. In spite of my request, a police officer came to take me to court.

In the details which follow, the public will judge if Catholics did not influence the defendant, his lawyer and some reporters, to throw mud in my face on this occasion.

Being called to testify, my testimony was at first objected to by the lawyer of the defendant, who showed by his action that I was unworthy of testifying. That lawyer afterwards asked me several irrelevant and obscene questions, which I answered in the most dignified way, and which were correctly reproduced by *Le Petit Californien*, in its issue of June 17th, 1888, but falsely and ridiculously reported by two other papers. Finally, the lawyer asked me: "What is your profession?" "A teacher of languages." "What were you before being a teacher?" "That is none of your business." "Do you decline to answer?" "I positively decline to answer."

My object, in refusing to say what I was before being a teacher, was to avoid hurting the feelings of Catholics and to keep peace with them as long as possible. But my delicate feelings, as well as my whole deposition, were misrepresented and ridiculed by Catholic reporters.

As the case was sent for trial to Judge Sullivan, I addressed to Judge Hornblower another letter declining to appear in court, for the reason that honest witnesses who are compelled to go to court are abused in and out of courts. Judge Hornblower gave my letter to all the newspapers for publication. Nevertheless, I was again twice subpoenaed. Finally, I addressed to Judge Sullivan the following letter, which reveals some facts worthy of interest:

"SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 12th, 1888.

YOUR HONOR: Having been subpoenaed to appear as an interpreter in the Larcher-Deshayes libel-suit, I wrote to Judge Hornblower a letter in which, for good reasons, I respectfully declined to accept the unsolicited office. In spite of my letter, I was forcibly taken to court by a police officer, and, consequently, abused by a lawyer, misrepresented and ridiculed by reporters. The case having been sent for trial to the Superior Court, for fear of being subpoenaed again, I sent a second letter to His Honor, requesting him, for special motives, to let me alone. Though, I do not know why, my letter was given away to all newspapers for publicity, I have been subpoenaed twice again to appear as a witness in that interminable case. As all indications are, that, in spite of my protestations, I shall be subpoenaed again, I write to you this letter, to explain to you my particular reasons why I should not be disturbed any more:

1. I know no more about that case than three-fourths of the French colony. Why should I be the only man annoyed in this way?
2. That case is not personal to me. Why should I be compelled to interfere with other people's affairs, without any advantage to me?
3. That case is a low and disgusting one. Why should I be compelled to disgrace myself and to soil my hands in touching it?

4. Up to the present time, in the judgment of many, the courts have treated that case in the most farcical manner, and everything indicates that, for mysterious motives, the guilty party will remain unpun-

ished, while his poor victims and their harmless witnesses will get the worst of it. The following facts will prove my assertion:

Everybody knows that Leon Deshayes, (or Barra), the proprietor-editor of a vile sheet, called *Le Bayard*, has insulted and blackmailed the most respectable characters in San Francisco. The French consul and his chancellor, the French Hospital, the French Benevolent Society, merchants, professional men, Jews, Catholics, (Rev. Father De Castries, among others), everything that is honorable has been attacked by this disreputable sheet. He has compared American courts to *poultry-yards*, (*basses-cours*), and policemen to *low ruffians*. In so doing, he has used a style so vulgar and so licentious that the purity of the English language could not admit of its translation; that all honest French families have refused to receive the dirty sheet, for fear of spoiling the virtue of their children; that many people wonder that Mr. Deshayes has not been arrested for vulgar language and immoral publications. Moreover, he has been so violent in his attacks, that many are astonished that this foul-mouthed scoundrel has not been shot in the streets like a mad and dangerous dog.

Two Frenchmen have been especially the object of his attacks: Mr. E. Marque, proprietor-editor of *Le Petit Californien*, and Professor Larcher, a teacher of languages. For his defamatory articles, they had him arrested, and I was subpoenaed to appear in court either as a witness or an interpreter.

What has been the result of it? Has Mr. Deshayes been punished? Far from it. For about six months since his arrest, he enjoys full liberty, being more bold, more impudent, more insulting than ever. Neither the police or the courts check him in his madness. He continues the publication of his paper in the same strain as before, attacking without mercy all those who do not swim in his waters, and especially those who had him arrested, and their witnesses. By an act of audacity seldom seen, he has managed to have his own pursuers arrested for an alleged defamation; and, as if there were a kind of complicity between him and the officers of the law, he had them arrested late at night, when bail could hardly be secured; and one of them was obliged to pass one night in jail, because it was too late to find a man who could bail him.

Finally, Judge Hornblower, who, in the opinion of sensible people, should have had the good sense to dismiss the case, placed the two poor men under bail, each for one thousand dollars, to appear, as criminals, before the Superior Court.

In the meantime, that mountebank has been predicting his victory and the punishment of his enemies. Though he is an alien and has foolishly published that he is not and will never be an American citizen, he has been allowed to address other aliens of the same type as himself, in behalf of a political party to which his supporters and judges belong. (See the San Francisco *Chronicle*, in one of its issues before the last election.) He has been idolized by the mongrel paper of the pseudo-Protestant-Catholic George Hearst. He has been coquetting with judges and inebriating them with his best frankincense. Who did not laugh at the high compliment paid by Deshayes to Your Honor, in one of his

last issues: 'Judge Sullivan' said he, 'is a *second Washington!*—another *Lincoln!*' (Great God! Can Your Honor stand it?)

What may be the cause of this ridiculous comedy? Why these monstrous flatteries thrown at the face of Your Honor? Why has the trial of that case been so long postponed? Why is a kind of patronage granted to a scoundrel who is considered in San Francisco as a plague and a public nuisance? Why is the Hon. Mr. Marque, who publishes a good, decent, conservative paper, treated with such meanness?

Some people attribute it to political manoeuvres. It may be so. As for me, I attribute it to religious intrigues, and this is the way I explain it:

Professor Larcher had the imprudence to select me as an interpreter of the libellous article. Your Honor knows what occurred in court and how things were reported, especially by Mr. Deshayes. I was in court by a mere accident. Suddenly, I became the principal figure, and the target of all, being derided by "*Le Bayard*" as a *renegade*, an *apostate*, an *ex-Catholic priest*, etc.

Your Honor may believe that I know, and that many know, the legitimacy of my cause, and that I do not care a fig for what can be said about me in that respect. I feel proud to have been attacked by that dirty sheet, *Le Bayard*, and I do not think that the compliments addressed to you honor you very much.

But my friends advised me to publish a few prudent words for my justification in having left the priesthood. Mr. E. Marque had the kindness to insert my letter in his paper and to say a few pleasant words about me.

From that time, has not the Catholic church used all its influence to turn the tide of opinion? Mr. Marque being for me, and Mr. Deshayes being against me, was it not natural for the Holy Catholic church to protect the guilty party and to send to Tartarus his innocent victims and their unfortunate witness?

Who has not heard of the exaggerated and low attacks made on me by that braggart, who is himself anti-Catholic and extra-radical? Has he not been informed about me by Catholics? Has he not received money from them and promise of protection and acquittal, if he would throw at me all his venom and sarcasms?

Mr. George Hearst, whose relations with me I have related, favors now, through hypocrisy, Catholics against me, as Catholics favor him. Has he not ridiculed me in his newspaper? Has he not, on the contrary, praised, in the most emphatic tones, the actions of Mr. Deshayes?

What is the meaning of the importance given to that fellow by the *Examiner*? What is the meaning of those high compliments paid to Your Honor?

Under such circumstances, I am called again, against my will, to appear as a witness, I—an Ex-Catholic priest—before a Catholic judge. What kind of justice can I expect for myself and for those in whose favor I am to testify?

I know how cruelly I have been, and I am still, persecuted by Catholics. I know how Catholic judges have dealt with me in the past.

Assuredly, I do not consider your Honor capable of committing a revolting injustice. But I know, by experience, that there is a great deal of elasticity in laws. The proof of it is that lawyers interpret them in different ways, and that the judgment of one court is sometimes reversed by another. I know also that judges, like priests, are human beings, and are neither infallible nor impeccable. I know that Catholic judges are under the influence of priests, and that they are recommended to knock down all that which can injure their holy religion and their saintly church.

When I see a man of the character of Deshayes compare Your Honor to Washington and to Lincoln, and when I see myself, an Ex-Catholic priest, summoned to testify against that scoundrel in favor of honest people, before a Catholic judge, I think I have the privilege to decline the high honor conferred upon me to appear in court either as a witness or an interpreter.

If it is your pleasure, you may subpoena me again, in spite of my protestation. If something disagreeable occurs, the responsibility of it will not rest upon me. I keep a copy of this letter for my personal use.

Yours respectfully, P. M. CLERC."

This letter gives an idea of the subterranean ways of Catholic priests. It shows how far their low intrigues can go, how far their power extends and to what degraded means they resort to attain their ends.

Their power goes so far as to penetrate the sanctuary of justice and to pollute its temple.

It goes so far as to employ in their service the most degraded characters, such as Leon Deshayes, the scurrilous editor of *Le Bayard*, who is reputed to be a disgrace to the French colony of San Francisco.

It goes so far as to buy and corrupt Protestant politicians, and to use their hypocritical papers, against men who are in their way.

It goes so far as to enroll in their service bands of hoodlums to show and spread their vile attacks, to hoot at and to insult their innocent victims.

While I was ridiculed by the *Examiner* and fiercely attacked by *Le Bayard*, I heard a great many of them express openly their joy. They imagined that I was played out in San Francisco. How sweet it sounded to their Catholic ears to hear me called "an apostate and a renegade" and to hear that those expressions were printed. One of them had the simplicity to tell me that "*I had been excommunicated.*" "*I excommunicated!*"—I replied,—"Never! I, myself, have excommunicated the church by spontaneously sending my resignation. Excommunication is a worn out expression. It is an old harmless gun which can only frighten ignorant Irishmen." When I had told him my tale, he said: "Well, I have nothing to say—circumstances alter cases."

This last attempt of Catholics to debase me before the public having been a miserable failure, because I am an old resident of San Francisco, well known for my honesty and morality, they tried to injure me financially and to boycott me, in my profession as a teacher, and in the sale of a little book which I published in June 1888, under the title of "The essentials of the French language."

The aim of that little book is to simplify the study of the French language, and it really simplifies it. It has been honored with the most flattering testimonials from the ablest French teachers and the press of San Francisco. Among the teachers, I will mention the names of Prof. Herbst, principal of South Cosmopolitan school; Prof. Paget, French teacher at the Berkeley University; Prof. Du Castel, French teacher at the Berkeley Gymnasium; Prof. Charlier, director of the Charlier French Institute in New York; Prof. Xavier Mefret, of San Francisco. Among the newspapers, I will mention *Le Franco-Californien*, *Le Petit Californien*, the San Francisco *Bulletin*, the San Francisco *News-Letter*, the San Francisco *Chronicle*, the San Francisco *Argonaut*, the San Francisco *Morning Call*, the San Francisco *Alta California*, the *Jewish Times*.

Though this book has been universally praised; though I have obtained, through it, the most satisfactory results, giving, within the space of one year, with two lessons a week, all the knowledge in French which is necessary to American students; the book has not found a very large sale in San Francisco. Up to the present time, hardly fifty copies have been sold. Why? Because Catholic French teachers have been directed neither to use it or to recommend it. Assuredly, Catholic schools would not use it, even were it a golden book.

As soon as my little book was published, a certain Professor Lambert inserted in all the newspapers of San Francisco pompous advertisements (which must have been paid for by Catholics) in which he announced that he would show, at Irving Hall, (1) that the use of a grammar to learn French is all nonsense; (2) that only eight hundred French words are necessary to speak French; (3) that only four months are needed to learn that language.

Through curiosity, I went, with several of my colleagues, to see that new wonder. There were about two hundred present. We all agreed in saying that Professor Lambert was speaking fluently in English, with a little Irish accent, while his way of expressing himself in French denoted that he had never put his foot on the soil of "*La Belle France*."

After having heard the three principal points of his lecture, I challenged him publicly, for the sum of eight hundred dollars, to prove his theory. I was hooted at by the Irish Catholic crowd. I left the place, calling him a quack, and I allowed his deluded followers to remain in their belief that "the moon is made of green cheese."

That illustrious professor, Lambert, had evidently been sent out by Catholics to throw discredit on my book, and to drive away from me the new pupils which I hoped it would bring me. They have pretty well succeeded. For my book has not had a great sale in San Francisco, and I have not gained from it a single pupil.

In November last, having read in the newspapers a letter from Rev. Father Montgomery, accusing the Methodist ministers of plotting in their vestry-rooms a *crusade* against the holy Catholic church, I went to see some of those gentlemen, who invited me to go to their meetings and to participate in their discussions. As the San Francisco *Chronicle* published a few items about me on that occasion, the cowardly priests sent to me some of their satellites to prevent me from saying anything against the church. Those satellites flattered me, promised me their

support and the support of Catholics. I answered that I had no faith in Catholics, and that I was determined to follow my own ways. I added that, since Catholics had taken the liberty to vilify me in the newspapers as an Ex-Catholic priest, I was bound to reveal the motives which have induced me to leave the priesthood; in other terms, to publish my pamphlet.

While I was re-writing that pamphlet, the following trick was played on me, on the second of January, 1889. While I was sleeping, at night, somebody carefully introduced himself into my room and took my purse out of my pocket, without touching my gold watch and chain nor anything else in the house, not even the valuables exposed in the parlor below.

The idea came naturally to me that Catholics, knowing that I was to publish a pamphlet against them, had instructed and even paid somebody to rob me, so that I should have no means to publish anything. It is an undubitable fact that Catholics did not conceal their joy on that occasion. On the contrary, they induced some of their children to hoot at me and to insult me in the streets. On seeing that, I went to a police officer and told him that, if I could not appear in the streets without being insulted, I would ask for the privilege of carrying a revolver, and I would shoot any Catholic dog which would dare to bark at me. Since that time, I have not been insulted, and I have quietly completed my little pamphlet.

To ward off the inevitable blow, Catholic priests have managed to celebrate their own merits in an article published in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, in its issue of January 22d, 1889. That article, entitled: "How priests live at home," is attributed to a reporter who is supposed to have visited several houses of priests and found in them only what denotes *poverty, frugality, mortification and hard work*. "There are in their houses," says the reporter, "no carpets on the floors, no curtains at the windows. A few common pictures hang on the walls. A common table, a common desk and a few common chairs adorn the rooms and the parlors. Their table is frugal. They never eat more than one kind of meat at a meal. Wine is a luxury which is allowed only for the benefit of visitors. Besides, they work very hard."

That singular article, which may have astonished more than one person, suggested to me the following apologue which I sent to Rev. Father Pendergast, to be given, for recitation, to the pupils of the Christian Brothers:

A DOG'S STORY.

There was, once upon a time, a particular dog, so vicious in his habits, that he had become the terror of the neighborhood. Uniting in his nature the cruelty and rapacity of a wolf with the cunningness and suppleness of a fox, he was creating havoc in farms and poultry-yards, not satisfied with picking up the fattest bones, but plundering hens and chickens. More than once, he had been caught in the act of stealing, and he was so well accustomed to be visited by broomsticks, that, as soon as he saw a man raise his cane, for fear of receiving the blow, he was piteously howling.

He had particularly plundered the poultry-yard of a poor little man whom he had almost reduced to beggary. That little man had the

temptation to kill the rascal. But as he was of a good nature, he resolved only to denounce him and to put his friends on their guard against him.

The cunning dog, who used as spies some confederate dogs, soon had knowledge of the intentions of the little man. He said to himself: "The little man wants to denounce me in the newspapers of the village. I know that those papers publish nothing except for cash. If I should snatch the purse of the little man, he could publish nothing against me. I will therefore snatch his purse."

And he went, on the sly, to the little man's house. He waited until the little man was soundly asleep, and then, cautiously and without noise, he took his purse away. Holding that purse in his mouth, he went to the newspaper man: "Do you see this purse," said he, "I have just found it. If you want to come to my house and report about it *all that I will tell you*, I will give you this purse, which is of no use to me."

The reporter throws his covetous eyes on the purse. "Very well," he says, "I will do anything for cash. Give me that purse and I will say for you all that you please, and even that you are a gentle dog,"

Soon they are at the dog's house. "Throw a peep around," says the cunning dog, who had previously put everything in shape to suit his purpose. "On the floor of my house, you hardly see a piece of straw to sleep upon and warm my paws. Around the walls, you see nothing but cracks, through which the wind, rain and snow enter to make my life unhappy. I have hardly a thin bone to gnaw. I am poor, sober, temperate. Is it not so?" "Yes, it is so," says the reporter. "And yet, they say that I am a happy dog and that I eat all the fat bones and tenderest chickens in the neighborhood, and even that I lap the ambrosia, the liquor of the gods. Is not this an infamy?" "Yes, it is an infamy," says the reporter. "Well" says the dog, "if you are willing to write for me a nice article, in which you will say that I am *poor, sober, temperate* and a *hard worker for the multiplication of my race*, upon my faith of a dog, this purse will be yours." "Agreed," said the reporter, who took hold of the purse and went away.

The next day, the aforesaid article appeared in the newspaper, and struck, like a thunderbolt, the bewildered community.

"That is too thin!—too thin!" everyone exclaimed. "Who wrote that article? Why did the reporter go to the dog's house? What interest had he to go there? Was he not paid for it? Was he shown everything? Was he not ordered to say only what would please the dog? Did not the dog himself write the article, giving a purse for its publication? We do not believe that report. We know better; and, to convince ourselves by our own inspection, we shall go and see that dog-house."

And they went. At first sight, they noticed nothing but outward marks of abstinence and mortification. But their instinct told them that there might be a partition, covering a dark closet, and that the dark closet might contain some unknown mysteries. They broke the partition, and, lo! what did they see? Heaps of fat bones, remnants of fat chickens and hens, large pails full of ambrosia, plunders and thefts of every kind.

The people went away satisfied that the reporter was either a liar or a fool, and, having made up their minds not to make themselves guilty of *canicide*, they put, in the proximity of the dog's house, the following sign:

"BEWARE OF THE DOG."

If this apologue had any characteristic of truth, I would suppose that the vicious dog gave more than one biting to the little man who had denounced his rascalities.

I suppose also, that, after the publication of my pamphlet, I shall endure more than one attack from Catholic priests. But, I am above their reach.

What can they say about me?

They may say [1] that, since I have abandoned the Catholic priesthood, I must have been a bad priest; [2] that I have abandoned the Catholic priesthood to indulge in my passions; [3] that I am a man without religion and a kind of infidel.

I. If they dare say that I have been a bad priest, I will say that the bishop of Dijon was a liar and an impostor when he delivered to me the testimonials inserted in my pamphlet; that Archbishop McClosky was a liar and impostor when he recommended me as a good priest, in his mansion, to the ex-protestant dean bishop; that the ex-protestant dean bishop was a liar and an impostor when he offered me letters of recommendation to go back to France; that Archbishop Alemany was an impostor, when, nine years ago, he wanted to restore me to the priesthood within the space of three days.

II. If they dare say that I have abandoned the priesthood to indulge in my passions, I will answer that I had a better opportunity to indulge in them, like every other priest, in the discharge of my priestly duties; that, in sending my resignation, my sole object was to save myself from starvation and to make my living by teaching in a college in the very place where I had been a priest; that, since the church has broken its engagements with me, I have found myself free from all engagements with the church; and that I have assumed the right to act like a free man. My whole history is known in San Francisco. Every one, who knows it, acknowledges that I have acted, in all things, as a noble man, and I am ready to justify every act of my life.

III. If they say I am a man without religion and a kind of infidel, I will answer that I believe in a just and good God, who will treat every one according to his merits; reward good Catholics, good Protestants and good Jews, and punish criminal hypocrites, such as Catholic priests; for I heard once a Father Jesuit say to priests assembled for a pastoral retreat: "Hell—gentlemen—hell is paved with heads of priests!"

I will say, moreover, that I believe in the Divinity of Jesus Christ, the savior and mediator of all men. I may, for a time, have been in the dark with regard to the real meaning of some points of his doctrine and even his divine character. After so many trials and persecutions, this may be forgiven. I may also, in my grief, have resorted to some places of legitimate amusement. It was a necessity of the time. If I had not done it, I would have become crazy or thrown myself into the bottom of the sea. But, I had lately the good fortune to meet real apostles,

real ministers of the gospel; and, thinking that they have the power of saving my soul, as well as and better than Catholic priests, I have resolved to join their church.

It is written: "*Corde creditur ad justitiam.*" Thinking that all Protestant denominations are in the way of salvation, and that they must give to each other, in charity and love, a helping hand to reach their destiny, I have joined the Protestant church which suits best the turn of my mind and the wants of my soul, and, on the 3rd of February 1889, I became a member of the Howard Methodist Episcopal church.

Now, my separation from the Catholic church is for ever consummated. Let no priest dare to approach me during my living, and at the hour of my death. I publicly and solemnly abjure Catholicism. While I confess that there are good and sincere Catholics, I proclaim that Catholic priesthood, such as it has revealed itself to me, is a *monstrosity and an abomination*.

P. S.—On February 26, 1889, the libel case of Leon Deshayes was called before Judge Sullivan, to be tried by a jury. As expected, I was subpoenaed to appear in court as a witness, and was intentionally maligned by a lawyer and a Catholic reporter.

After I had translated into English the libellous article, lawyer Duprey (a French name which corresponds to the English word "*meadow*"—that is to say, a thing *naturally green*) asked of me the following question: "Have you not been a Catholic priest?" I answered "Yes sir, during seventeen years; happily, I am no more." "Was there a reason for your leaving France?" "Yes, sir, a mighty big one, and if it is your pleasure, I will tell you all about it." Judge Sullivan moved not to insist upon the question.

Other questions were asked, which I refused to answer, as being immaterial. The Catholic reporter, however, made about it a story of his own, which, at my request, his newspaper corrected the next day, confessing that two errors had been committed about me by the same Pat who had previously visited the houses of Catholic priests and had found them poor, sober and chaste.

After ten minutes' deliberation, the twelve jurors brought in, against Leon Deshayes, a verdict of *guilty*, and their verdict was endorsed and approved by the *Cercle Francais*, by the most decent and intelligent part of the French colony and by all Americans familiar with the case.

Though, in this case, Catholics have evidently tried to disgrace me, I have got out of it with more honor than they. My pluck and courage in court has been generally admired. My action, in siding, against a vile sheet, with the French consul and his chancellor, with the French hospital and the French benevolent society, with all that is honest in San Francisco, and even with the grand jury, has raised me as high as the honorable Catholic judge, who had the dishonor of being compared to Washington and Lincoln by a vicious alien—higher than the Catholic priests who have used the communist Deshayes as a tool against me, as they use the socialist, Henry George, in New York, against the good, holy and charitable Dr. McGlinn.

VII.

An Address to Roman-Catholic Priests.

HYPOCRITES:

The man whom you have so unjustly and so cruelly persecuted, not because he was impious, dishonest or immoral, but because you found him *dangerous* and opposed to your criminal life; the man, whom, to destroy your own shame, you have tried to imprison; the man whose reputation you have endeavored to lose in order to save yours; the man whom your low intrigues have compelled to leave his calling to lead a private life; the man whom you have ruined and robbed in San Francisco; the man who, in your opinion, is nothing but an apostate, a renegade, etc.,—that man is here, in San Francisco, after fifteen years of an obscure life and of most cruel persecutions, esteemed and honored by hundreds of families, who consider him as good and as respectable as priests parading at the altar.

From that eminence, a thousand times more enviable than your polluted pulpits, he looks at you with contempt, and addresses you these words, which he wishes to be heard in all parts of the earth:

Hypocrites, you impose heavy burdens on the shoulders of your people, and you do not touch them with the extremity of your little finger.

You preach to others purity and chastity, when your life is a life of debauchery.

You preach to your people the total abstinence, when, in your residence, in your church and even in your confession-box, your mouths stink with the evaporations of intoxicating liquors.

You order your people to be fasting before communion, and I have seen you drinking the whole night and taking coffee and crackers before your masses.

You forbid your people to eat meat on Fridays, and I have seen on your tables, on the same day, ham, beefsteak and turkey.

You preach disinterestedness, when you are the slaves of Mammon, and employ all means, *even illicit* to acquire riches.

You preach to others the necessity of work, and your life is a life of idleness.

You preach the necessity of prayer, and you never pray, except in public, to be seen by men or to receive your prey.

You preach humility, charity, forgiveness, and you are domineering, revengeful, slanderous, cruel. If it was in your power, you would establish inquisitions, build dungeons, and put to torture all those who condemn your lives. You have none of the virtues which you preach. You are merely sounding cymbals. You are not the ministers of God, nor the representatives of Christ. You do upon earth the work of Satan.

Hear, O hypocrites, hear the words which the Lord addresses you by his prophets:

Ezekiel, xxxiv. "Woe to the shepherds of Israel, that feed themselves. Should not the flocks be fed by the shepherds? You ate the milk and you clothed yourself with the wool; and you killed that which was fat. But my flock you did not feed. The weak, you have not strengthened; and that which was sick, you have not healed; that which was broken, you have not bound up; and that which was driven away, you have not brought again; neither have you sought that which was lost. But you have ruled over them with vigor and with a high hand.

And my sheep was scattered, because there was no shepherd. There was none that sought them.

Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord:

Behold, I myself come upon the shepherds. I will require my flock at their hand, and I will deliver my flock from their *mouth*, and it shall be *no more meat for them*."

Jeremia xxiii. "Woe to you, pastors that destroy and tear the sheep of my pasture.

My heart is broken within me, because the land is full of *adulterers*. The *priests* are *defiled*, and, in my house, I have seen their *wickedness*, saith the Lord.

And I have seen the likeness of *adulterers* and the way of *lying* in the prophets of Jerusalem.

And they strengthened the hands of the wicked, that no man should return from his evil doings. They are *all become to me as Sodom*, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah.

Therefore, saith the Lord of Hosts to the Prophets: Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and I will give them gall to drink. For, from the prophets of Jerusalem corruption has gone forth in the land."

Osee v. "Hear ye this, O priests. There is a judgment against you, because you have been a *snare* to them whom you should have watched over and a *net* spread upon Thabor, and you have turned aside victims into depth."

Malachias i. "To you, O priests that despise my name, you offer a *polluted bread* upon my altar.

Who is among you who will kindle the fire (*tapers*) upon my altar *gratis*.

I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will not receive a gift at your hand.

Malachias ii. "If you will not lay it to your heart to give glory to my name, *I will curse your blessings*. Yea, *I will curse them*.

And I will scatter to your face *the dung of your solemnities*.

The lips of the priests shall keep knowledge; and they shall seek the law at their mouth.

But, *you have departed out of the way*, and caused many to stumble at the law.

Therefore, have I also made you *contemptible and base before all the people*, because you have not kept *my ways*."

Yes, Catholic priests, *you have been made base and contemptible before all the people*.

This is the word of God; and the voice of the Almighty is echoed by the voice of the people.



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